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INTERVIEW:
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We commemorate

50

years since the
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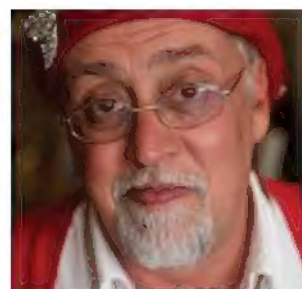
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Denise Welch to appear at L Fest, organisers confirm

Bosses of L Fest, the UK's biggest lesbian festival have announced that Loose Women star Denise Welch will be appearing at the festival which takes place from Friday 21 July until Monday 24 July. Denise will be on hand for the screening of her film 'Black Eyed Susan', which tells the story about her own personal experiences with depression. Michelle Partington, founder of charity Behind The Mask, commented on the news: "Her award winning film called 'Black Eyed Susan' is about her own personal experiences with depression. I won't ruin it anymore but I will say it is a very raw, honest account which I'm sure will resonate with so many of you. "Denise is an Ambassador for MIND but works passionately at grass roots level to help those who are not in a position to help themselves. I'm very much looking forward to seeing her film again and listening to her talk. A true ambassador for mental health awareness. Oh, and it helps that she is a lovely lady too!" Denise Welch, and her film, will be on the L Fest Arts Stage on Sunday 23 July.



Have ya heard?



Life is a Cabaret! Hit musical on tour in the Midlands

As the saying goes, 'Life is a Cabaret old chum!' - and you'll be delighted to hear that the hit West End musical Cabaret is set to head back out on tour starring Will Young and Louise Redknapp. Since its Broadway premiere in 1986 and the famous movie version with Liza Minnelli and Joel Grey, Cabaret has won a staggering number of stage and screen awards including 8 Oscars, 7 BAFTAs and 13 Tonys. Cabaret features some of the most iconic songs in musical theatre including Money Makes The World Go Round, Two Ladies, Maybe This Time and of course, Cabaret and comes to Malvern Theatre in October.

Same-sex couples sought for new TV series

TV production company 7Wonder are on the lookout for same-sex couples for a brand new TV series. The series will follow couples who are thinking about getting engaged but sense they still need to win their fam-

ily's support for their relationship. We will follow both the couples and their families as they seek to understand each other's point of view as they all prepare for the next step in the couple's relationship.

If you're interested in taking part or seeking more information, then visit loveagainsttheodds.com/latog.



De Montfort Uni on lookout for Trans cancer patients

De Montfort University in Leicester is currently on the lookout for Trans people who are receiving treatment for cancer. Patients should have had a diagnosis in the last five years, but more than three months ago and will be asked questions such as: Have you had to think about whether to disclose to a cancer professional? How have your interactions with cancer professionals been? Have you wanted to disclose but felt unable to?

If you're interested and want to find out more with no obligation to take part, then contact Wendy on 07708 130866 or email LGBTresearch@dmu.ac.uk

Clonezone Birmingham to celebrate 35 years of business

Birmingham gay boutique Clonezone, which also has branches in Manchester and London, is set to celebrate 35 years of business this month with a huge party at the city's Eden Bar. Taking

place on Saturday 15 July, the free party will feature Drag Idol finalist Brenda LaBeau as well as a prize balloon drop and CZ Go Go Boys.



Purple Rain set to fall on Birmingham

A touring show celebrating the music of Prince will stop off at the Birmingham Hippodrome in March next year.

Presented by the producers of hit shows Hair-spray, Motown The Musical and Thriller Live, Purple Rain will pay homage to the late star's songwriting genius and showmanship.

The show visits Birmingham from 27 to 31 March. For more information, visit birminghamhippodrome.com



Flashdance The Musical tour to hit Birmingham



Flashdance The Musical returns to the UK for the first time since 2011 starring Strictly favourite Joanne Clifton and singer-songwriter Ben Adams, and will come to Birmingham's New Alexandra Theatre from Tuesday 4 to Saturday 9 December 2017.

Flashdance tells the inspiring and unforgettable story of 18-year-old Alex, a welder by day and 'flashdancer' by night, who dreams of going to the prestigious Shipley Dance Academy and becoming a professional dancer. When a romance complicates her ambitions, she harnesses it to drive her dream.

Have ya heard?



Sasha Velour set to head to the Midlands

Season Nine RuPaul's Drag Race star and performer Sasha Velour has been announced as part of a nationwide tour, with a stop here in the Midlands.

Sasha, who has won two of the Season Nine shows, has made it to the final four of the hit US drag talent show alongside Trinity Taylor, Shea Couleé and Peppermint.

Sasha, who's real name is Alexander Steinberg, will take to the road as part of the Klub Kids club night which visits cities including Glasgow, Liverpool, Canterbury, Manchester, London and Newcastle - but will be stopping at Birmingham's Nightingale Club on Friday 2 February 2018.

Tickets are on sale now from klubkids.co.uk and start at £15.00 - with an option for VIP Meet & Greet tickets at an additional cost.



Miss Moneypenny's 'Night at the Proms' with BGSO close to selling out!

Iconic former Birmingham clubbing brand Miss Moneypenny's have announced that tickets for it's 25 year celebration, 'A Night at the Proms' in conjunction with the Birmingham Gay Symphony Orchestra, is dangerously close to selling out.

The show, which takes place on Friday 24 November, will see 25 years of Miss Moneypenny's house classics performed by the much-loved gay orchestra at Birmingham's Symphony Hall.

The event will also include a 'visual spectacular' - creating a cross between Last Night of the Proms and Cirque Du Soleil with lighting, lasers and effects.

Visit thsh.co.uk to book tickets.

Hello Sailor!



LGBT float wins 1st prize in Shrewsbury Carnival!

A float made up of entrants from Shrewsbury's LGBT community was awarded first prize for the fifth year running at this year's annual Shrewsbury Carnival.

LGBT Shrewsbury spokesman, Geoff Hardy said: "The streets were lined with people watching and it was great to be a visible part of the town".

The theme for the carnival, which took place last month, was 'Carnival Goes Around the World'.

Well done to all involved!

Local Life Story

Name: Graham Littlewood

Place of birth: Birmingham

Star sign: Scorpio

Age: 49

About Graham

Where did you grow up?

Handsworth (nice).

Single or attached?

Single but looking.

What makes you happy?

RyanAir flights from East Midlands airport to Limoges in France.

What makes you sad?

Drunken customers.

What makes you angry?

I'm a Scorpio - I don't get angry, I get even.

If you could change one thing about yourself, what would it be?

More tolerance (see the question above).

What's been the most embarrassing thing you've done in your life?

Most recently, I lost it with

a really rude customer and ranted and raved my five-star hygiene rating at her, only to realise I was shouting at the wrong person. I did apologise, but my point was made, all be it to the wrong person!

Now that same-sex marriage has been legalised, would you consider getting married?

I doubt very much people would see me as marriage material, so the answer would be no.

Coming Out

When did you first know you were gay?

Gay, dear? Who, dear? Me, dear? No, dear!

When did you come out?

At the age of 24. My then girlfriend of three years ran off with a glass collector who I fancied, and I knew it was time to act.

What would you say to a youngster trying to come to terms with their own sexuality?

For me, being gay has always been one percent of what I'm about. Just be yourself - don't be a sheep, be a shepherd.

Your Career

When you were younger, what did you want to be?

To be honest, when I was younger I always wanted to be standing in the burger van at 3am dealing with a drunken moron for the price of £3, so I'm



living out my long-held wish.

What was your first job when you left school?

I was the editor of a famous gay magazine but was sacked on day one.

What is your role at Devil's Kitchen?

In the early days, bearing in mind I've been on Hurst Street for 17-and-a-half years, I was cook, head chef and onion chopper. Nowadays, with new cook and onion chopper Stuart Shorthouse, I stumble around in the background playing a management role and learning the new task of how to take payment by card, which started at the end of May.

What are the highlights?

We are talking about Devil's Kitchen here, ain't we?... Apart from getting through Saturday night unscathed, the highlights would be seeing off all the haters over the years and finally getting a star on the Zone magazine map. Also, being one of the gay village's longest-established venues,

Quickfire

Who's your favourite actor?

Julie Walters - amazing in everything she does, from comedy to drama.

What's your favourite book?

I'm currently reading Kenny Everett's autobiography.

Half empty or half full?

I'm laugh-out-loud for those who know me. I don't even get to half empty.

What's your favourite food?

Anything from my local chippy. I love a challenge.

And how about your favourite drink?

Blackcurrant squash.

If you could take a selfie with one person, alive or dead, who would it be?

Donald Trump, with the tagline underneath: One's unhinged and crazy, the other one runs America.

with only the likes of the Nightingale, the Fox and Missing Bar being older.

Where did the name Devil's Kitchen come from?

Back in the day there was a very successful bar called Angels. Being based outside, and having close links with the owner, the name just came naturally - Angels and Devils.

Gay Scene

How long have you been frequenting the Midlands gay scene?

Twenty-plus years.

And what's been your fondest memory of the gay scene?

It has to be the remarkable Subway City. And, of course, the memories of personally knowing the owner and founding editor of this magazine, and remembering - as I still remind him - of when he had nothing and delivered the magazines in a tatty old white van that blew smoke out the back.

Who are your favourites on the scene?

Two stand out, Twiggy, with her cutting-edge humour, and the amazing David Nash, who organises the weather for Pride and apparently used to be a DJ.

What do you most enjoy about the scene?

It has the ability to pull together in a crisis. The rest of the time we can't stand each other (that's a joke!).

What have you noticed about the way the gay scene's changed over the years?

I think nowadays the customers arrive and think that all the top-notch venues have just magically materialised. But I can tell you that Eden didn't just happen, Equator doesn't just open, the longstanding venues of the Nightingale, the Fox and Missing aren't busy for no reason. It's testimony to the bloody hard work that the owners put in.

Time Out

Where do you like to go on a night out?

I'm a very rare scene-goer and an even rarer drinker, but the occasional pint of Guinness and black, usually after Pride, is most welcome.

What do you do to relax?

I've recently bought a boat called Apple.

Do you have any pets?

Most people know I'm a dog lover - no pun about my exes intended there! I have a lovely dog called Roxie.

What type of holiday do you prefer?

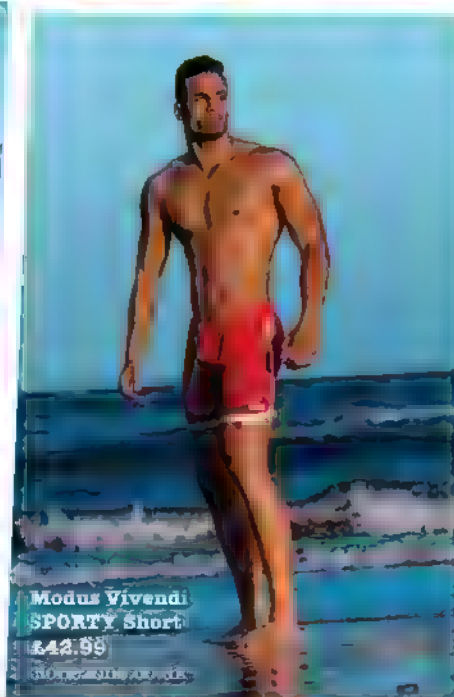
Building a retirement home for Andrew King from The Fox in the south of France is my kind of holiday.



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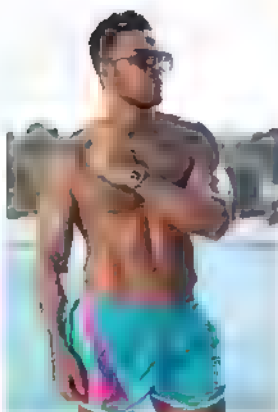


LET'S GO FOR A SWIM...





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50 years since the decriminalisation of homosexuality...

1967-2017



This year marks a half century since the decriminalisation of homosexuality in the United Kingdom, a big move that allowed the 1960s' LGBT community to feel one step closer to equality

So what was it about, what happened and why?

Back in 1967, the Sexual Offences Act decriminalised homosexual acts between two men in private. The move was a first step on the long road towards the equality that the LGBT community enjoys today. Since that landmark year, laws have been challenged, rights have been won, stigmas broken and lives changed.

So how did we get to that landmark moment in LGBT history? Rewind to the 1960s, when Member of Parliament Leo Abse and House of Lords peer Lord Arran offered proposals to amend the law for homosexual men, changing the way they were treated by introducing the Sexual Offences Bill. They saw the Bill as a way to make attitudes towards gays more liberal, a change which they felt was much needed following a staggering rise in the number of prosecutions of homosexual men.

The 1965 Sexual Offences Bill used findings from the 1957 Wolfenden Report, which suggested that certain homosexual offences should be decriminalised, 'offences' at which you wouldn't even bat an eyelid these days. The committee which oversaw the report was set up to

"It was a change which they felt was much needed following a staggering rise in the number of prosecutions of homosexual men."

investigate prostitution and homosexuality in the 1950s. As a result, they found that criminal law couldn't intervene in the 'private sexual affairs of consenting adults' behind closed doors.

In short, the Wolfenden committee said that: "Unless a deliberate attempt be made by society through the agency of the law to equate the sphere of crime with that of sin, there must remain a realm of private that is, in brief, not the law's business."

Following the publication of this report, the government of the time showed support for Lord Arran's liberal thinking and put the Bill through parliament. It was considered that the law should not penalise gay men, already subject to much 'ridicule and derision'. Indeed, Roy

Jenkins, the home secretary in 1967, commented that gay men "suffer from this disability" and "carry a great weight of shame". His remarks essentially summed up the government's perspective on homosexuality.

The Bill received royal assent on **27 July 1967** after a late-night debate in the House of Commons. Once it had become law, decriminalising homosexuality, the age of consent was set at 21. It wasn't until 1994 that this was reduced to 18, and only in the year 2000 was it reduced to 16 - the same age as the heterosexual age of consent.

So what does all of this mean for us today?

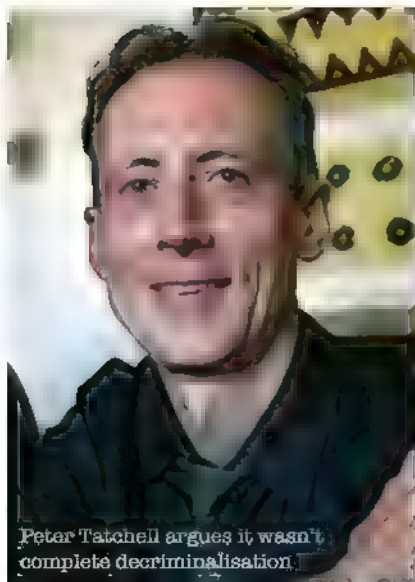
Well, freedom for one thing, despite the fact that LGBT communities across the world still don't enjoy many of the freedoms that we do here in Britain.

But was it really a victory for the gay community?

According to LGBT activist and human rights campaigner Peter Tatchell, no, not completely.

Writing in *The Guardian*, Tatchell said that the liberalisation of 1967 'was not as liberal as many people believe'.

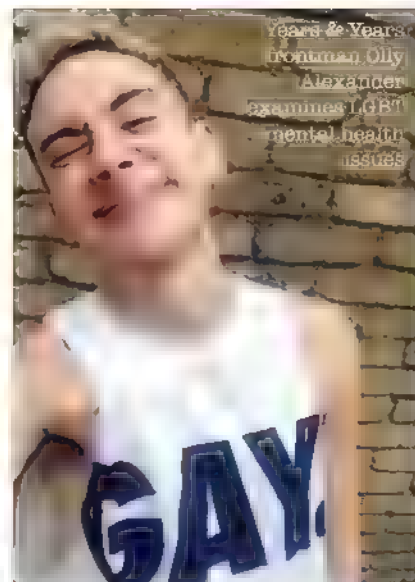
He argues that an estimated 15,000-plus gay men were still convicted in the decades that followed - meaning that homosexuality was only partly decriminalised.



Peter Tatchell argues it wasn't complete decriminalisation



Rupert Everett explores gay life since the Bill in 50 Shades Of Gay



Years & Years frontman Olly Alexander examines LGBT mental health issues

In fact, he argues that it was merely a step in the right direction. While the passing of the Bill saw the maximum penalty of life imprisonment removed and the blanket ban outlawing all homosexual acts repealed, gay sex remained prosecutable unless it took place in strict privacy, which meant in a person's own home, behind locked doors and windows, with the curtains drawn and with no other person present in any part of the house.

In fact, in 1998, over 30 years after the Bill was approved, seven men in Bolton were convicted (two handed suspended jail sentences) and put on the Sex Offenders Register because of this

How is the 50th anniversary being marked?

Well, aside from Birmingham Pride coining the 2017 festival's theme as 'Love & Pride' in recognition of the historic occasion, the BBC has announced an exciting season of dramas and documentaries dedicated to LGBT life in Britain.

Called Gay Britannia, the series of television, online and radio programmes will mark the 50th anniversary of the decriminalisation of homosexuality

Included in the season is a BBC Three documentary, hosted by Years & Years front man Olly Alexander, which will examine why LGBT people are more vulnerable to experiencing mental health issues. Olly will use the programme to

"In 1998, over 30 years after the Bill was approved, seven men in Bolton were convicted and put on the Sex Offenders Register"

discuss his own experiences with depression.

BBC Two, meanwhile, will broadcast compelling drama Against The Law, in which Daniel Mays stars as Peter Wildeblood, a journalist who was found guilty of homosexuality in the now-infamous Montagu Trial of 1954.

Stephen K Amos also makes a contribution to the season, presenting The People's History Of LGBT Britain, which takes a look at the precious memorabilia that has helped to document and change the lives of LGBT people over the last 50 years.

Other shows announced in the series include Is It Safe To Be Gay In The UK? and Man In An Orange Shirt. Check out bbc.co.uk for more information about

when they air

Meanwhile, Channel Four is screening 50 Shades Of Gay, a documentary fronted by actor Rupert Everett that explores how gay life has changed since homosexuality was decriminalised.

So where are we now, in 2017?

Peter Tatchell makes a strong point, and the fact that he can do so shows that maybe things aren't quite where we'd like them to be. We need to recognise that, for sure - but at a time when the LGBT community is busily acknowledging and celebrating the 50th anniversary of what happened back in 1967, it would feel wrong simply to focus on the fact that there's more work still to be done. So in the interests of celebrating the progress made, we think it's important to remind ourselves of just how liberal a society we're fortunate enough to live in. It's not perfect, no, but the rest of the world really isn't looking like a more appealing place to live - and in many cases it's a far more dangerous place. The relatively recent legalisation of gay marriage and the increase in publicity around the issue of transgender rights shows that evolution towards equality is continuing to happen.

Fifty years on from that 1967 Bill, with steps towards complete and total tolerance continuing to be taken, we're maybe not in too bad a place at all.

POLICING WITH PRIDE



“ I permanently
needed a handbag
on duty with me,
which was
supplied by
the force...

‘The younger
officers laugh
at how it used
to be. They
find it hard
to imagine that
was the case.’ **”**



Jayne Sawyer is the former Chief Constable of Staffordshire Police having retired last month. Before she left her post, Jayne sat down with Midlands Zone to talk about her role in the police force, LGBT issues both within the police force itself and in the wider community and talks us through her role as National Police Chief's Council Lead for LGBT matters.

You're retiring this month from Staffordshire Police, having progressed through the ranks from a police constable to chief constable. Indeed, you're the first female chief constable of Staffordshire. How have you seen attitudes change within the organisation toward females?

I joined in 1984. In those days, female officers were few and far between. There would be one or two on the shift. The uniform was a skirt and sort of tights. You were issued with one pair of trousers and could only wear them on nights if the weather was bad. I permanently carried a handbag on duty with me, which was supplied by the force. Wearing a skirt, there was no belt, so you couldn't put any attachments on your belt such as a handcuff pouch. Everything was in a handbag. We weren't issued with any protective equipment, but these days it's exactly the same. So the only thing was a pair of handcuffs - no truncheon or anything, no spray, - no anything, actually. The hats we wore were soft and offered no protection.

Not long after, there was a female department, and the only thing women dealt with were children and those sorts of things. It's moved on massively.

Equality now means all officers are treated in the same way and have the same kit. They're expected to do the same things. The female officers work in finance departments, dog handling, investigation, without anybody batting an eyelid. It's just the best people for the job, as opposed to what gender or anything else you are

The younger officers laugh at how it used to be. They find it hard to imagine that was the case. We were issued with a whistle in those days. Male officers wore a tunic with pockets in that you could put your whistle in. Women's tunics hadn't got pockets, so we couldn't wear a whistle. We had to put it in our handbag. It was almost that the job was designed for males and we'll somehow find a way for females to fit in. Wearing a skirt and carrying a handbag is completely impractical.

What are the biggest obstacles in tackling LGBT issues across the UK?

The biggest obstacle is confidence in reporting. LGBT crimes and incidents are massively under-reported for all

sorts of reasons, like lack of confidence in the police, fear of being outed by reporting. There's a normalisation issue as well, and this happens to me everyday - I've grown to expect it. Something I would say is completely unacceptable but which people almost normalise is the behaviour of being abused. Under-reporting is absolutely the biggest issue and there are lots of reasons for it.

We do an awful lot about domestic abuse. We probably don't do enough on same-sex domestic abuse, and again it's similar issues - thinking we'll not take it seriously, we'll splash it all over the newspaper etc. We've got to be sensitive to those sorts of things.

It's reported that the portfolio for policing LGBT matters has progressed rapidly during your time as National Police Chief's Council lead. Can you expand on this...

The portfolio required a chief officer lead. Not because we're the best people to progress the issues but because chief officers have the ability to make things happen; to attend meetings with other chiefs so that things can spread between different forces.

The portfolio hadn't had a chief officer for a while, so I took it over. A group of very motivated LGBT officers and staff across the country had started to gather themselves together to set up a network. They needed someone to help them launch the network and somebody to report to about the issues. I became that person.

A very early example is the National

“...it would be naive of me to say there aren't still individuals who are bigoted.”

“People can join as an officer and be as openly gay as they want.”



Trans Police Association, which had been having a debate over how to recognise if it's a gender recognition issue on a Police National Computer if you've got a gender recognition certificate. A debate had been going on about the evidence that was required to alter the PNC, but they couldn't get anywhere with it as they hadn't got anybody in a high enough position putting their points across, it took about two weeks to resolve because I could negotiate with the people with the PNC and there was no awkwardness to it at all. It was a lack of understanding on both sides. So there are things that I've been able to progress because of the enthusiasm and passion of people who want to make a difference, so it really hasn't been difficult. It's moved forward without a doubt. Across the country there are LGBT officers and staff who've been really active in making sure change has taken place.

There has been a significant increase in hate crime towards the LGBT community. How is the police

service responding to this and what initiatives are you undertaking?

I think that increase can be positive, can be negative. I believe that LGBT hate crime was happening anyway. Unless somebody tells me differently, there's no evidence to suggest this it's not that it's happening more, it's that more people are reporting it, which is a positive. We can only do something about incidents that are reported. More people are having the confidence to report things which have happened to them that are completely unacceptable. We have better things in place now to deal with hate crime, such as awareness training amongst officers. Hate crime is the least understood, probably the least reported. Officers and staff have had fear of dealing with LGBT hate crime because they don't understand it. They don't want to say the wrong thing, and they don't quite know what to say.

We've become much more aware and in tune to helping people who want to report crimes. Things like police attendance at Pride events across the

country. These things can only give confidence to the LGBT community

Are there still any problems with attitude within the police force with regard to selecting LGBT staff?

Yes, of course there are. It would be naive of me to say there aren't still individuals who are bigoted. But those individuals are few and far between. But they're not the sort of people we want to recruit. It's not heard about enough, but we sack people who are overtly homophobic and racist, and that does happen across the country. We don't want those sorts of people in policing.

What positive moves have you personally made with regard to recruiting from the LGBT community?

I perhaps haven't recognised that the fact I'm the national LGBT lead has itself had an impact. I am sitting here today with an LGBT lanyard on because when I first took over the portfolio, I went around the country talking to many different groups, and it hammered home

Domestic Violence

Hate Crime

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to me the realisation that just the smallest messages, such as a poster on the wall or an openly gay senior officer, can send a signal that people can join as an officer and be as openly gay as they want.

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the 'partial' decriminalisation of homosexuality. Looking ahead, how best can policing further help to remove prejudices towards the LGBT community?

We can help, but so can lots of organisations within the LGBT community itself. Every time there's a hate crime and people are prosecuted, we need to make sure the public are aware that we take reports of hate crime seriously. There are sometimes enhanced sentences given, and we need to make sure that those are publicised, increasing both awareness of the reporting of hate crimes and making people generally understand that it's completely unacceptable. We've got a part to play in that, and so have lots of other statutory and voluntary agencies.

What training do police officers receive to enable them to understand LGBTs and how to tackle LGBT hate crime etc?

There's always diversity training, which includes LGBT. They're spoken to very early on in their service by members of the LGBT network support association here in Stafford. We've appointed all across the force something we call Maglose, which are lesbian/gay liaison officers. They're a single point of contact who can offer advice and be someone officers can turn to if they're dealing with issues affecting the lesbian and gay community that they've never dealt with before. There are all sorts of different inputs they receive during their service. Magloes is an important one.

Do you see Pride events being more at risk of terrorist attacks in future?

The way to fight terrorism is to carry on as normal as much as possible - and to be vigilant. The Pride events are really important for communities across the country. They are massive celebrations. Years ago they wouldn't have been able to take place. So while

there's always the possibility of any event with large groups of people being targeted, it's the police's responsibility to keep people safe.

What do you consider the most valuable piece of advice you'll be passing on to your successor?

I'm generally about the way you treat people. I wouldn't need to pass on advice to my successor as he's already had a long career in policing.

If we're delivering a service that we'd be happy for our own family to receive, then we're getting something right. I'm a true believer that if we treat the people in an organisation properly, they're more likely to get on with members of the public.

If there were one thing you wish hadn't changed about policing during your time on the force, what would it be?

The politicisation of policing, without a shadow of a doubt. We have to act without fear or favour. It's a well known phrase, and it concerns me that these days policing appears to be more and more politicised. We should always be as independent of politics as is possible, to ensure that we're able to police communities impartially.

What aspect of policing have you found the most rewarding in your 33 years in the force?

It's the complete and utter change in attitude towards equality. Perhaps it's moved with the times.

If there were one entirely new initiative you could introduce to improve policing, what would it be?

I have family in teaching who're able to tell me when children are in high school from the age of seven which ones we're going to be dealing with by the time they become teenagers and go onto a life of criminality.

If services were to jointly, properly and with joint funding invest in that early prevention in lives of children who were likely to end up in the hands of the police, then we could actually change lives so that people don't go on to be radicalised, abuse drugs and alcohol, commit crimes etc. But the way policing is funded and all the other agencies are funded, the way the agencies have targets to meet individually as agencies, means that proper intervention really early on in lives that are going to turn out to be chaotic doesn't take place as much as it should. Therefore we all separately deal with the consequences later on.

Finally, do you have any unfinished business?

No, not really. I've been in Staffordshire a long time, but I haven't been a chief for long, so there are things I could've done, but as I said before, I don't leave with any regrets. Policing is constantly evolving.

We're always changing as society changes, so you never finish the business that you set out to do. I'm proud of having reached the rank of chief constable and spending 33 years policing, and I don't leave with any regrets.



1 in 14 people aged 15-24 has chlamydia



Order a free chlamydia test at
www.b-clear.org.uk



Available to people aged 16-24 living in Stoke-on-Trent only

Who was 1951 - 2017 Gilbert Baker?

The activist behind the iconic rainbow flag...

Following the news last month that two new colours representing people of colour had been added to the LGBT community's iconic rainbow (or Pride) flag in the US state of Philadelphia, we take a look at the man behind the original work, who sadly passed away earlier this year...

Rewind to 1978, and huddled in the attic of a San Francisco gay community centre, artist and gay rights activist Gilbert Baker, along with a team of 30 volunteers, hand-dyed fabric in eight different colours and stitched them together, creating, unbeknownst to him, what would later become a worldwide symbol of the LGBT community.

Despite there now only being six colours on a modern-day rainbow flag, the original eight each had a meaning

Hot Pink - Sex

Red - Life

Orange - Healing

Yellow - Sun

Green - Serenity with nature

Turquoise - Art

Indigo - Harmony

Violet - Spirit

In an interview, Baker explained why he felt the rainbow flag provided a good representation of the LGBT community: "We needed something beautiful, something from us," he said. "The rainbow is so perfect because it really fits our diversity in terms of race, gender, ages, all of those things. Plus, it's a natural flag - it's from the sky!"

Gilbert refused to trademark the flag, saying that it belonged to the gay community

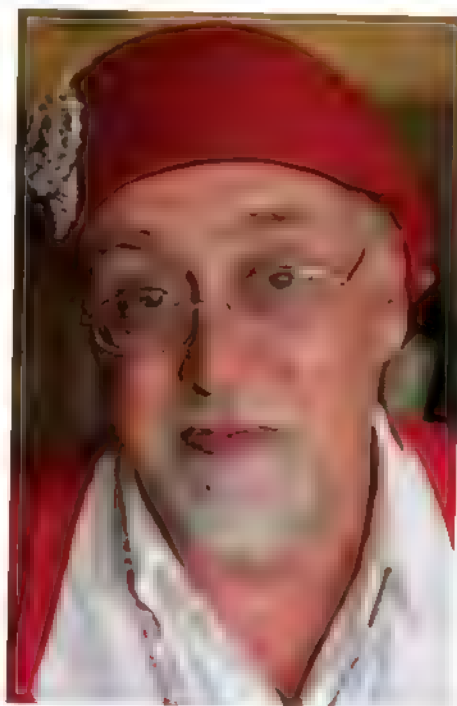
Before coming up with his famous 1978 creation, Baker served in the United States Army from 1970 until 1972, when he was honourably discharged while stationed in San Francisco at the beginning of the gay rights movement. It was here that he became friends with gay rights activist and future senator Harvey Milk.

Following the assassination of Milk, demand for the rainbow flag increased. To meet that demand, the Paramount Flag Company, of which Baker was an employee, dropped the hot pink stripe due to the unavailability of hot pink material. The flag was modified yet again in 1979, when it began being hung vertically from lampposts - which obscured the middle stripe Indigo was the victim this time round, leaving the six colours you usually see today

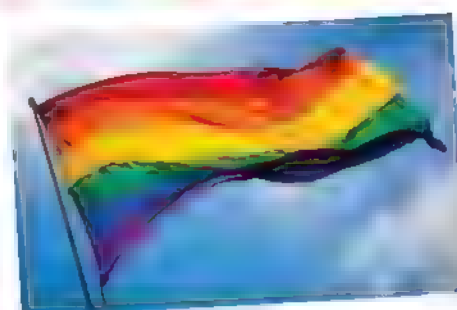
Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Turquoise, Indigo, Violet

Gilbert Baker died in his sleep at home in New York City on 31 March 2017, aged 65. Since then, his work has been honoured with a stop-motion Google Doodle and a rainbow font (inspired by the rainbow flag) called Gilbert.

So the next time you head out on a Pride parade waving a rainbow flag, or even paint a rainbow on your face, the fella you've got to thank is Gilbert Baker, a man who, according to California state senator Scott Wiener, "helped define the modern LGBT movement".



Above, Gilbert Baker - artist, activist and creator of the iconic rainbow flag (below).



AGEING BETTER AND PRIDE IN SPORTS PRESENTS THIS YEAR'S

PINK PICNIC

SUNDAY
30th JULY

EVERYONE WELCOME

at Kings Heath Park, Birmingham (Sat Nav. B14 7TQ)
(next to the vicarage road car park on the playing field)

NO Bars | NO Funfair | NO Charge
www.blgbt.org

0121 643 0821



Birmingham
LGBT



MIDLANDS
ZONE
MEDIA SPONSOR

SUMMER OF PRIDE

Your guide to this month's LGBT Pride festivals across the Midlands...

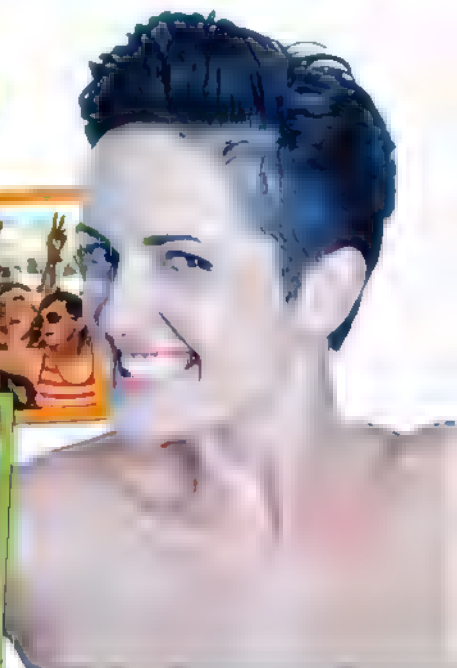
Live, laugh and love with the girls at L Fest

Friday 21 - Monday 24 July
Prestwold Hall, Loughborough
lfest.co.uk

The UK's only lesbian festival moves to a brand new venue this year - the luxurious Prestwold Hall in Loughborough.

Spread across four days and featuring a whole host of entertainment, the 2017 edition of the event stars former Kosheen vocalist Sian Evans. Other entertainment on offer includes dance, cabaret, DJs, comedy, arts, literature and film. A great weekend for friends and families, L Fest caters for 'solos' too - you'll make more friends than ever before!

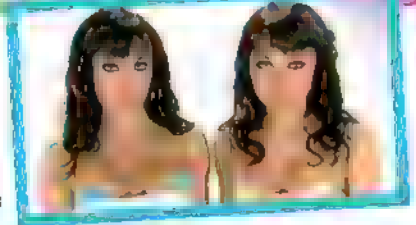
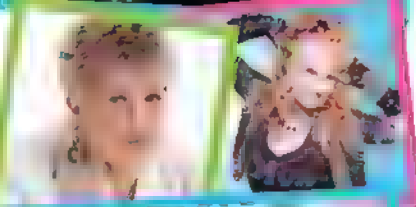
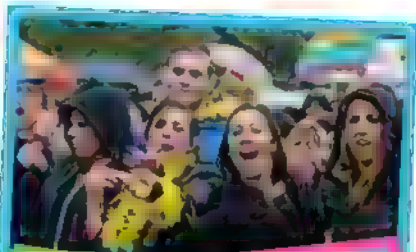
Tickets are on sale now and start at £60 per day or £120 for the weekend.



The Pride of Chesterfield

Sunday 23 July - Queen's Park
facebook.com/chesterfieldpride

Returning for its third year, Chesterfield Pride is one of the region's fastest-growing LGBT festivals, attracting thousands of people throughout the course of the day. Featuring a host of live music and cabaret on the main stage, the 2017 edition of the event includes performances by Hazell Dean, The Cheeky Girls, Kelly Wilde, Pink Angels, Blonde Electra and more. Community stalls, markets, food & drink outlets and a funfair add to a frenetic day of fabulous family fun.



Nottinghamshire Pride returns for 2017



Saturday 29 July - Broad Street, Nottingham
facebook.com/nottspride

Nottinghamshire Pride offers a day of colourful celebration for the county's LGBT community.

Kicking things off is a Pride parade through Nottingham's streets - starting at the corner of Castle Gate and Lister Gate. The parade will then wind its way through the city to Broad Street, where the celebrations continue until 6pm with a main stage, dance arena, arts arena and community stalls. It's set to be a great day out, so be sure to pop along and show your support!

UK Pride Diary

JULY

Pride in London

Saturday 8 July
Trafalgar Square
prideinlondon.org

UK Black Pride

Sunday 9 July
Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens
ukblackpride.org.uk

Bourne Free Pride

Saturday 1 July
The Triangle, Bournemouth
bournefree.co.uk

Sparkle: The National Transgender Celebration

Friday 7 - Sunday 9 July
Sackville Gardens, Manchester
sparkle.org.uk

Pride Bristol

Saturday 8 July
Castle Park
pridebristol.co.uk

Newcastle Pride

Friday 21 - Sunday 23 July

Town Moor
northern-pride.com

L2

Friday 21 - Monday 24 July
Prestwood Hall Estate, Loughborough
l2est.co.uk

Pride in Hull

Saturday 22 July
Queens Gardens
prideinhull.co.uk

Brighton Trans Pride

Friday 21 - Sunday 23 July
Brunswick Square, Hove
transpridebrighton.tumblr.com

Chesterfield Pride

Sunday 23 July
Queens Park
facebook.com/
Chesterfieldpride

Norwich Pride

Saturday 29 July
The Forum and Chapelfield
Gardens
norwichpride.org.uk

Swindon & Wiltshire Pride

Saturday 29 July
Town Gardens, Swindon
swindonwiltshirepride.co.uk

Liverpool Pride

Saturday 29 July
Liverpool Pier Head
liverpoolpride.co.uk

Brighton Pride

Sunday 30 July
Preston Park
brighton-pride.org

AUGUST

Chester Pride

Saturday 19 August
Castle Square
chesterpride.co.uk

Brighton Pride

Friday 4 - Sunday 6 August
Preston Park
brighton-pride.org

Leeds Pride

Saturday 5 - Sunday 6 August
Lower Briggate
leedspride.com

Warwickshire Pride

Saturday 19 August
Pump Room Gardens
warwickshirepride.co.uk

Manchester Pride

Friday 25 - Sun 27 August
Manchester
manchesterpride.com

Saturday 26 August
Victoria Gardens, Truro
cornwallpride.org

Walsall Pride

Saturday 26 August
Gallery Square
facebook.com/
walsallprideofficial

SEPTEMBER

Leicester Pride

Saturday 2 September
Victoria Park
leicesterpride.com

Worcester Pride

Saturday 9 September
Worcester Common
worcesterpride.org/pride-2017

Cumbria Pride

Saturday 16 September
Carlisle City Centre
cumbriapride.org

JULY 23rd Chesterfield QUEEN'S PARK

1pm - 7pm PRIDE S40 2ND


Hazel Dean


The Cheeky Girls


Kelly Winkle


Pink Angels


Amrick Chams


Monde Electra


Lucas Primmer


Smashby


Sam Solace


Divina De Campo


David Christopher


Jonathan Booth


Just Affix


Kath Bombelle


Michael Webster


Stacie Moore


Cherry Pop

CHILDREN'S AREA FOOD OUTLETS
BAR FUNFAIR STALLS
FREE ENTRY EVENT

OFFICIAL AFTERPARTY
SO BAR
CHESTERFIELD
S41 7SH


GILDER GROUP


HONDA


FOX


Derbyshire LGBT+


SO! BE PART OF IT


COFFEE


DANCE


MUSIC


Pride

Coventry Pride

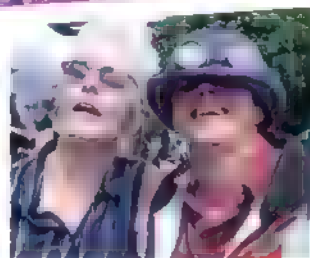
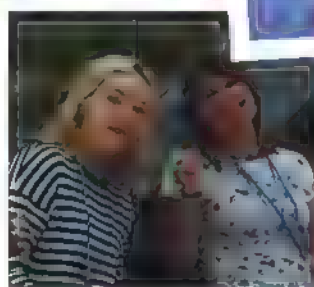
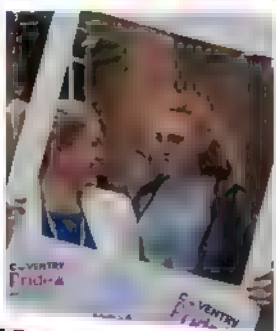
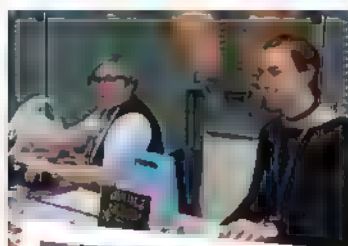
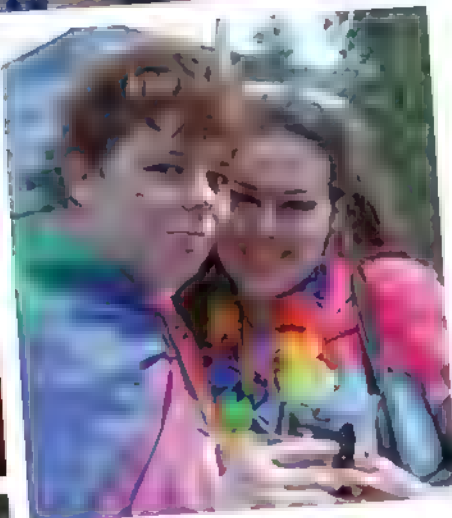
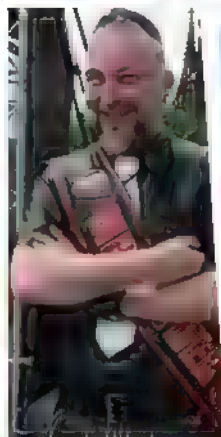
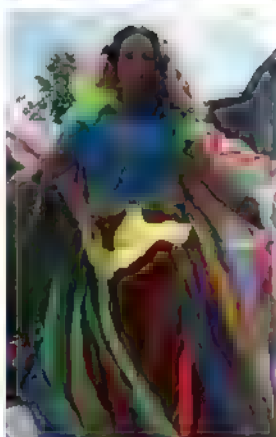
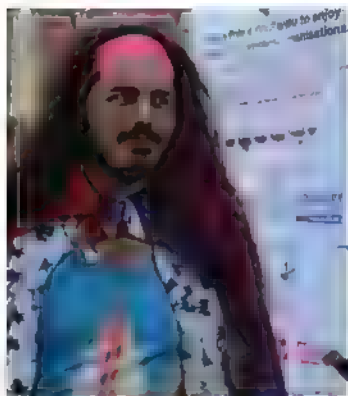
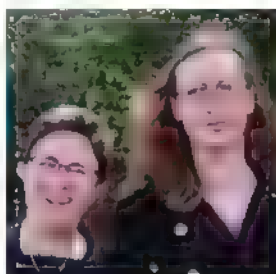
hailed 'awesome'!

Organisers of Coventry Pride have hailed the 2017 festival an 'awesome' success.

Now in its third year, the event took place last month and saw an approximate increase in attendance - when compared to 2016's figures - of 2,500.

Pride bosses reckon the overall number of visitors this year was around the 10,000 mark.

It looks like things are only going to get bigger and better for Coventry's LGBT community!





Warwickshire Pride 2017

Thursday 18th August
11.00am - 8.00pm
The Pump House, Broadgate, Leamington Spa

Market stalls, Live performances, There will be a children's playground, a family area, food stalls, bars, and much more

Exhibiting Local & International artists, community groups, and organisations
of interest to the LGBT+ community

Free Entry, All People Welcome



Ravenna

Asifa Lahore

Feryl, Relley C. etc

Kyle Passmore, Sassi Afrika

Marcia D'Arcy, Valerio Lysander, Taken

Titine La Voix, The Sambaassadors of Groove

Cordy Camp, Kian Taylor-Jackson, Khakao Burashii

Official Warwickshire Pride After Party at Episode Bar & Hotel Leamington

DJs

Live performances from Asifa Lahore, Relley C.

Titine La Voix, and more...

Prizes and giveaways for 'best dressed'

www.warwickshirepride.co.uk

Proudly supported by

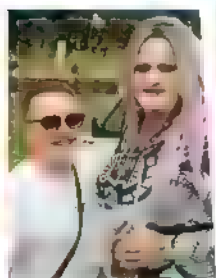
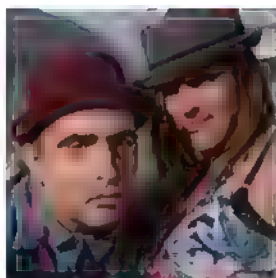
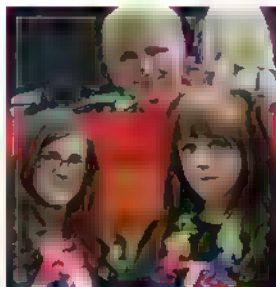


Registered charity number: 1142440

'Over 5,000' attend 2017's Stoke-on-Trent Pride

Bosses at Stoke-on-Trent Pride have expressed their delight at 'over 5,000 people' attending last month's annual festival.

The event took place on a sunny day, with plenty of the city's LGBT community coming out to celebrate. Held in the new location of Hanley Park, the festival's main-stage lineup included fabulous Bizarre Inc vocalist Angie Brown. We're looking forward to 2018 already!



Celebrating the rich culture, creative flair and history of the Jewellery Quarter.

For more information, please visit www.jewelleryquarter.net

#JQFestival

28-30
JULY

Live entertainment;
family-friendly
activities; street food
stalls and guided
heritage tours.

f /jqdtbirmingham

t @JQBID

i @jq_bid

ST PAUL'S
SQUARE

GOLDEN SQUARE

A stylized, high-contrast image of the Leicester skyline, featuring the De Montfort University tower and the Leicester Arena, set against a red background with a rainbow gradient.

LEICESTER PRIDE

2017

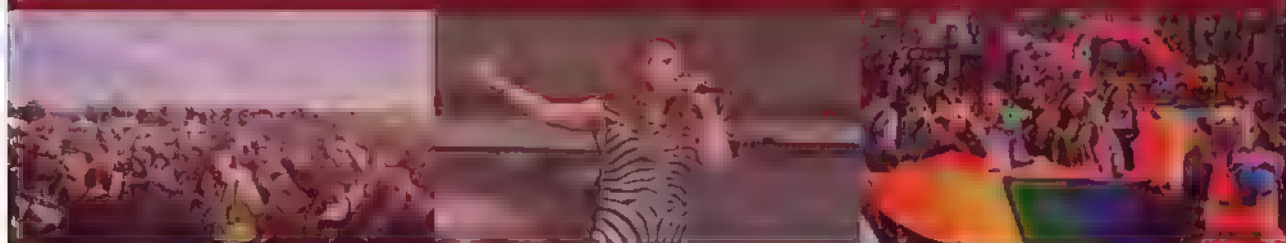
SATURDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER

**VICTORIA PARK, LEICESTER
12 NOON - 8PM**

**FULL LINE UP TO BE
ANNOUNCED SOON**

www.leicesterpride.com

@leicesterpride



Pride In Sport

Birmingham LGBT gives the lowdown on its month-long celebration of LGBT participation in sport

Pride In Sport is back! This year we've extended the one-day event into a month-long festival of sports and activities. We kick off the celebration with our hugely popular taster afternoon at Aston Uni on 1 July. From there, we launch into a month-long programme of sporting events and activities, including kayaking, swimming, running, badminton and rugby, as well as our free classes and events here at Birmingham LGBT. We'll wind the month down with our Pink Picnic at Kings Heath Park on Sunday 30 July, where we'll host some 'sports day'-themed fun and games.

Competitive Taster Afternoon Saturday 1 July Aston University

Come along for a taster afternoon of traditional and non traditional sports! Building on the success of last year, representatives from LGBT sports groups across Birmingham will be in attendance to encourage you to try out something new. Visit our website for timings and a full list of the participating groups and clubs. Book your place today!

Badminton Tournament and a Rainbow Ramble Saturday 8 July Sir Doug Ellis Sports Centre

Midlands Out Badminton will be holding its annual tournament at the Sir Doug Ellis Woodcock Sports Centre, in addition to its weekly 10am Saturday sessions. There will also be a Rainbow Ramble. The walking group will wind its way through Edgbaston and enjoy a whistlestop tour of the Barber Institute. Meet at Five Ways train station from 10.30am.

Water sports at the Reservoir Saturday 15 July Edgbaston Reservoir

We'll be down at Edgbaston Reservoir from 2pm - so if you fancy some kayak-
32 MidlandsZone.co.uk

ing and stand up paddle-boarding, book yourself a place in advance by emailing activate@blgbt.org. There'll also be run leaders from the Birmingham Swifts in attendance. Are you up for a jog around the reservoir? If so, remember to bring your running shoes.

Touch My Brum Saturday 22 July Sutton Rugby Club

The Birmingham Bull's fourth annual touch rugby tournament takes place throughout the day. Everyone's welcome to come along and offer their support. To participate, sign up at touchmybrum.com. The Bulls are holding touch-rugby sessions throughout July, so pop along and try one out.

Pink Picnic Sunday 30 July Kings Heath Park

We end the month with our ever-popular and super-relaxed Pink Picnic in Kings Heath Park. We've added a classic sports-day element to this year's event (think tug of war, egg and spoon), as well as some tai chi. LGBT Sports Activator Ros Gammie says: "We're really excited about this year's Pride In Sport. Turning it into a month long celebration means that we can put on more free events and activities, and give the community even more opportunities to make the most of the summer and get involved with some free sports and fitness. Pride In Sport is about showcasing the amazing range of inclusive and accessible LGBT sports and fitness activities going on throughout Birmingham. No matter what day of the week, there's something fun that anyone of any ability can get involved in!"

Regular Events and Classes Three, four, five & beyond

In addition to our packed weekends, there are activities to enjoy every single

day throughout July. Maybe you want to attend one of our free classes here at the Birmingham LGBT Centre, or try out a swimming session with the Moseley Shoals on a Wednesday?

Perhaps you're keen to take up running? If so, come along to one of the Tuesday technical sessions coordinated by the Birmingham Swifts and then put your skills to the test during their Thursday social runs. Our trans football group is also back this month, following

its hugely successful launch with Aston Villa Academy back in March. Contact us for more details!

**Check out the
Birmingham LGBT
website at blgbt.org for
updates and booking
details.**



PRIDE IN SPORT 2017

A MONTH-LONG CELEBRATION OF LGBT PARTICIPATION IN SPORTS

Pride in Sport is back!

After a successful first year, we are delighted to announce that Pride in Sport is back! This year we will be celebrating a month-long celebration of LGBT participation in sports, from June to July. We will be hosting a series of events, including a Pride in Sport Weekender, a Pride in Sport Week, and a Pride in Sport Month. We will also be running a series of workshops and seminars, and a series of social events. We will be working with a number of local sports clubs and organisations to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the celebration.

We will be running a series of events, including a Pride in Sport Weekender, a Pride in Sport Week, and a Pride in Sport Month. We will also be running a series of workshops and seminars, and a series of social events. We will be working with a number of local sports clubs and organisations to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to participate in the celebration.


activate
PRIDE IN SPORT

WEEKEND ACTIVITIES IN JULY

Sat. 1st July
SPORTS TASTER
AFTERNOON AT
ASTON UNI

Sat. 8th
BADMINTON TOURNAMENT
& RAINBOW RAMBLE

Sat. 15th
WATERSPORTS AT
THE RESERVOIR

Sat. 22nd
TOUCH MY BRUM



Birmingham LGBT



Prejudice and Pride

Many of our places were home to, and shaped by, people who challenged conventional ideas of gender and sexuality. Fifty years after the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality, we're exploring our LGBTQ heritage with a programme called Prejudice and Pride. We're holding events, special exhibitions and much more.

For ever, for everyone

Explore our LGBTQ+ stories

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/exploring-lgbtq-history-at-national-trust-places

Holy Smokes!

It's 10 years since the smoking ban came into force in venues across the country...

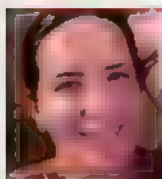
On 1 July, it will be 10 years since England became the last country in the UK to introduce legislation banning smoking in workplaces and enclosed public spaces.

By the time the law came into effect, the halcyon days of the smoker were long gone. That golden era, when any Hollywood star worth their salt would've considered the cigarette to be a glamorous and indispensable accessory, had been replaced by an angry clamour for smoke-free zones, as evidence mounted that smoking - and passive smoking - could lead to all manner of life-shortening diseases and ailments.

So a decade later, how has the ban been embraced? Is the country still full of grumpy puffers, sucking on a tab in the biting cold and generally feeling resentful about their miserable lot? How do the venue owners feel about the ban - has it made a difference for better or worse to their establishment and their profit margins? And what about the anti-smoking brigade? Are they happy with their cleaner-air environments, or would they like to see ciggies banned altogether and smokers publicly flogged? Zone questioned a cross-section of people about the great English smoking debate 10 years on...



Some of our readers have their say about the smoking ban...



"As a smoker, I still think the ban is spot on. Why should non smokers be subjected to inhaling potentially damaging toxins?"

Emily Cation, Leicester



"The ban was the reason I started smoking. I would go out with friends who smoked and be left guarding the table whilst they went for a quick one. Rather than be left alone, I ended up following and trying one, two, then buying a pack of 10."

Tom Hendy, Birmingham



"It's a relief to be able to go in somewhere and have a nice meal or drink without coming out smelling like an ashtray and wondering how much potential damage you've acquired courtesy of someone else."

Michelle Hall, Malvern



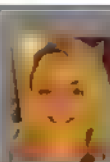
"Ten years since I've had my clothes burnt in night clubs and a smoker's cough the morning after. That's flown!"

Lisa Harrison, Wolverhampton



"something that's on fire in your mouth?"

Barry Tomes, Birmingham



"As a smoker, it's normal to me now not to smoke in bars. I do resent getting attitude from non-smokers in the smoking areas, though."

Neil Ryder, Birmingham

What's On

Sat 1 - Sun 9 July

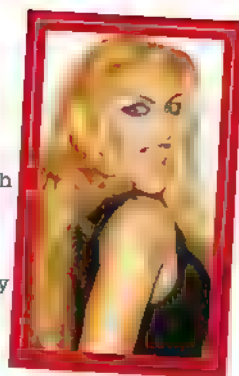


RuPaul's Drag Race star Aja at Glamorous

Marty Smith at Midlands gay venues!

Alongside her Nightingale Club residency, Birmingham's award winning drag queen Marty Smith will be performing two fantastic shows this month.

The first takes place at Shrewsbury's C:21 nightclub on Monday 3 July as part of their Fabulous Mondays gay night. Then it's on to The Village Inn in Birmingham on 7 July for a bit of Friday night fun!



Coming to Birmingham's Glamorous bar & club this month is RuPaul's Drag Race Season Nine queen, Aja!

Aja came ninth in the hit US drag talent show and will be making her debut in the second city on Friday 7 July. RuPaul fans, this is definitely not one to miss!

Friday 7 July - Glamorous, Birmingham



Drag Idol 2016 finalist Fanny Burns at Eden

Kickstarting a month of entertainment at Birmingham's Eden Bar is the one and only Fanny Burns on Friday 7 July in the bar. The Drag Idol 2016 finalist will be delighting the crowd with her winning blend of great vocals and fabulous comedy. The perfect start to your weekend of partying!

Friday 7 July - Eden, Birmingham



A night of cabaret with Kara Van Park at Leicester's Dover Castle

Just because it's Sunday doesn't mean the fun has to stop! That's why we're looking forward to seeing the fantastic Kara Van Park take to the stage at Leicester's favourite gay cabaret bar on Sunday 9 July.

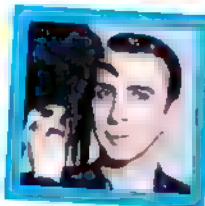
**Sunday 9 July
Dover Castle, Leicester**



Memorabilia A night of Marc Almond at Eden

If you're a fan of Soft Cell, Marc Almond and Marc And The Mambas, then Memorabilia is the night for you! Starting at 8pm in the Marquee, the celebration sees DJs The Guv'nor and Paul Jones take to the decks in Eden Bar's marquee for a night of Tainted Love nostalgia.

Friday 7 July - Eden, Birmingham





THE VILLAGE INN

FRIDAY 07 - MISS MARTY

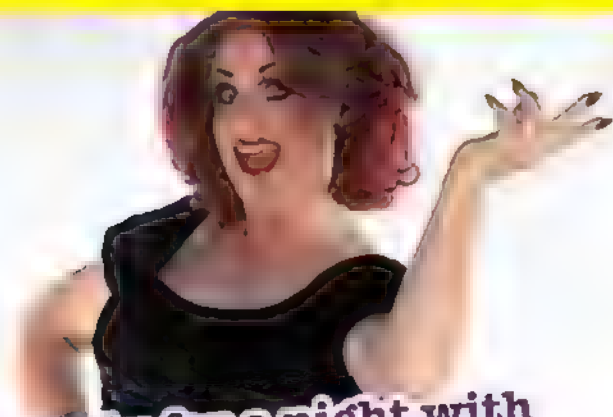
FRIDAY 14 - LOLA LASAGNE

FRIDAY 21 - LADY IMELDA

FRIDAY 28 - SANDRA LONDON

What's On

Mon 10 - Sun 16 July



Get ready for a night with **Lola Lasagne**

Lola Lasagne makes a welcome return to award-winning Birmingham gay venue The Village Inn on Friday 14 July. Expect great wit, fab vocals and an electric atmosphere. We can't think of a better way to begin the weekend - so grab your mates and head on down for a fun-filled Friday!

Friday 14 July - The Village Inn, Birmingham

Grab a great roast at **The Loft**



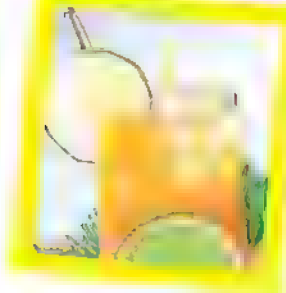
Look no further than The Loft for your hangover-soothing Sunday lunch! With an impressive selection of meats available, you'll be hard pressed to find a better offer!

**Every Sunday -
The Loft, Birmingham**

Cocktail time at **Sidewalk**

Fancy joining us for a cocktail or several at Sidewalk? They're two for one from 12pm till 8pm every day - or all day on a Monday! Which one will you choose?

**Everyday at Sidewalk,
Birmingham**



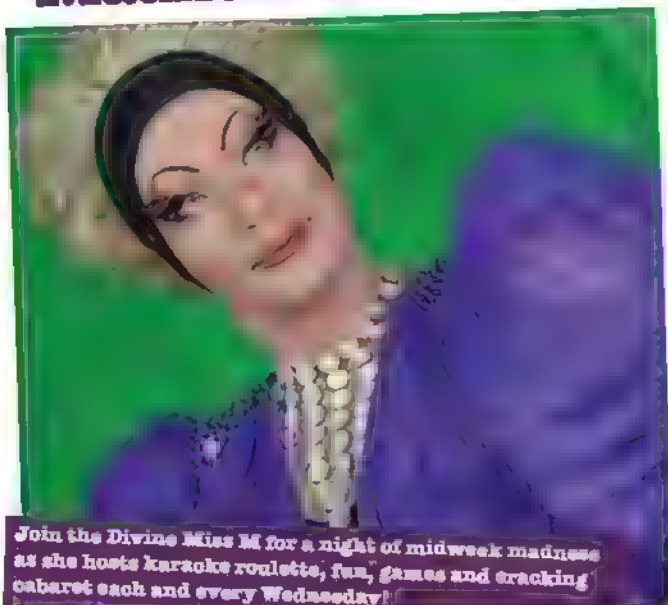
Brenda LeBeau at Edén



It's time for another Drag Idol finalist to grace the stage at Birmingham's Eden Bar. Hurrah! Saturday 16 July sees Brenda LeBeau returning to the popular venue.

Saturday 16 July - Edén, Birmingham

Miss M's Midweek Madness at Missing



Join the Divine Miss M for a night of midweek madness as she hosts karaoke, roulette, fun, games and cracking cabaret each and every Wednesday!

Every Wednesday at Missing, Birmingham

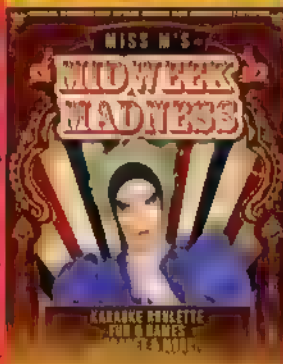
MONDAY



TUESDAY



WEDNESDAY



THURSDAY



Missing

ENTERTAINING YOU 7 NIGHTS A WEEK!



FRIDAY



SATURDAY



SUNDAY

What's On

Mon 17 - Sun 23 July



Back in Brum! Danny Beard

You can never have too much of Danny Beard! Following his Best National Cabaret Act victory in this year's Midlands Zone Readers' Awards, the glorious Danny is returning to Birmingham this month for even more glittery fun!

Thursday 20 July - Eden Bar, Birmingham



Get Pounded

Who doesn't love £1 drinks? We certainly do, and we're sure you do too - so head down to The Nightingale every Thursday for a great and pleasingly cheap night out!

Every Thursday - The Nightingale, Birmingham



Lady Imelda in Birmingham!

Follow Lady Imelda's high-heeled, show-stopping tour down to The Village Inn on a special night with the 5000s as they perform their new material.

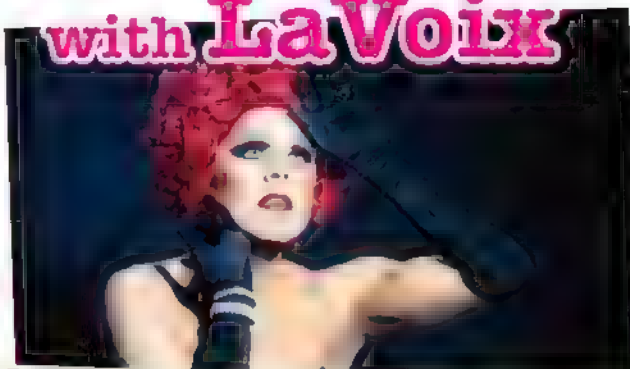
Friday 21 July - The Village Inn, Birmingham

£1.50 Bombs every Thursday at Sidewalk

If you're a fan of Jagerbombs, Skittlebombs or Bucabombs, then Sidewalk is the place to be every Thursday. You can get these, along with many more flavours, for just £1.50! Bombs away, kids, bombs away!

Every Thursday - Sidewalk, Birmingham

Touch My Brum with LaVoix



Birmingham Bulls rugby team return with their annual touch-rugby tournament - alongside a hefty helping of classic cabaret at team sponsors Eden Bar! Cosmic hosts the launch night on Friday 21 July, with Britain's Got Talent star LaVoix continuing the party on Saturday the 22nd.

Friday 21 & Saturday 22 July - Eden, Birmingham

July Entertainment

eden

Fri
7th

IN THE BAR
Fanny Burns

Drag Idol 2016
Finalist Great Vocals
& Comedy



Fri
7th

IN THE MARQUEE
Memorabilia

MUSIC OF Soft Cell /
Marc Almond and
Marc And the Mambas

8pm till late • 2 DJs - The Guv Nor and DJ Paul Jones "JONESY"

Sat
15th

Brenda LaBeau

Drag Idol
Finalist,
Great Vocals & Comedy

Celebrating 33 yrs of Clone Zone • Prize Balloon Drop • CZ Go Go Boys



Thurs
20th

Danny Beard

BGT Semi-Finalist
Drag Idol UK Winner
Great Vocals & Comedy



Fri
21st

Touch My Brum

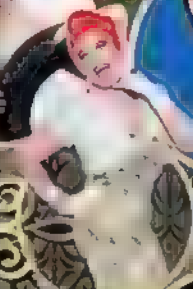
LAUNCH NIGHT WITH PERFORMANCE BY COSMIC



Sat
22nd

Touch My Brum

WITH PERFORMANCE BY LA VOIX



Fri
28th

MidsBears

Monthly Meet-Up
Bears, Cubs, Otters, and
their admirers



Sat
29th

Mary Mac

The Cock O' The North
Drag Artiste
Great Vocals & Comedy



Every Fri

DJ Nikk
Karaoke & Disco

Every Sat

DJ Dan
Charts & 80's from 2am

Every Sun

DJ Nikk
Karaoke & Disco

116, Sherlock St, Birmingham B5 6NB | End of Hurst Street | 0121 622 1953 | www.TheEdenBar.co.uk

What's On

Mon 24 - Mon 31 July



Gemma Collins TOWIE star in Birmingham!

Fans of Gemma Collins should get down to the Nightingale Club on Saturday 29 July, where the TOWIE star is making a personal appearance. Meet her in the flesh and have your photo taken with her too! Babe, it's gonna be awesome!

Saturday 29 July - The Nightingale, Birmingham

XXL is back!



The Midlands' biggest and boldest men only club night, XXL, has got a new slot the last Friday of each month. With resident DJ and producer Paul Morrell providing the soundtrack to the night, the award winning event sees hundreds of men from bears to cubs and everything in between partying the night away.

Friday 28 July - The Core Club, Birmingham

Furry fun with MidsBears

If you're a bear, or a friend of the bear community at large, then pop down to MidsBears at Eden every third Friday of the month. It's a great night out and attracts a fab crowd. Check it out - you'll love it!

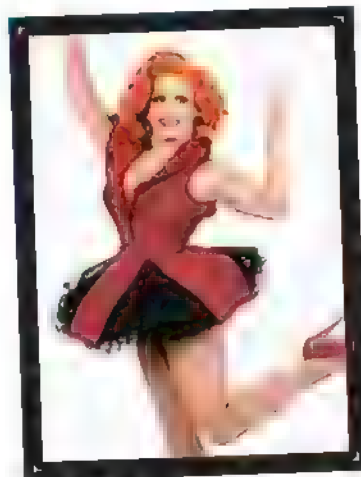
Friday 28 July - Eden, Birmingham



Sandra back in Brum!

And just like that, it's the end of the month! But what better way to finish things off than by heading for The Village Inn and joining that 'whore of Hampstead Heath', Sandra London, for her regular last Friday of the month residency!

Mary Mac returns to Eden Bar!



She's back once again for another night of cabaret fun!

That's right, the Scottish starlet Mary Mac returns to Eden for a sensational show featuring potty mouthed humour and a right good sing song!

If you've not seen Mary yet, what the heck are you waiting for?!

Saturday 29 July - Eden, Birmingham



**THE BIGGER BETTER
BOLDER BEARS CLUB**

XXL BIRMINGHAM

28th JULY

10PM - 4AM £6 ENTRY

THE CORE CLUB

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SUNDAY FROM 12 NOON

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143 BROMSGROVE STREET BIRMINGHAM - 0121 622 2444

What's On

Arts • Theatre • Entertainment



Splendour Festival

Since 2008, this family-friendly festival has built up a proud history of attracting national and international talent of the highest calibre to the city. In addition to an impressive two-stage line-up of pop and indie artists, expect a funfair, market stalls, kids' activities and a silent disco. Oh, and look out for herds of red and yellow deer too, grazing in the beautiful yet easily accessible Wollaton Park. With all that festival noise going on, they may well be wearing ear plugs. The line-up includes Kaiser Chiefs, Billy Ocean, Busted and British Sea Power.

Sat 22 July, Wollaton Park, Nottingham



Céline Dion

Celine is admired by many a gay, but she's also a bit like Marmite - you either love her or hate her. Here at Zone, we adore the very bones of her - but not everybody in the LGBT community is quite so love-struck.

We've been conducting some research into why she's not universally popular. Here's just a sample of the responses we gathered to the question: Why do so many gays hate Celine Dion:...

"She seems like a nice enough person but she's ugly and sane"; "Because we want our divas to be damaged, drug addicted, bi-polar queen bitches of the universe and Celine is just too damn nice and normal. She can even take the piss out of herself"; "She's annoying, and her voice sounds like cats being beaten".

One person even took exception to "the absurd dimensions of her enormous box, always outlined and embarrassingly visible in those tight white pantsuit ensembles she wears" - but being a *family-friendly* gay magazine, we thought we'd leave that one out...

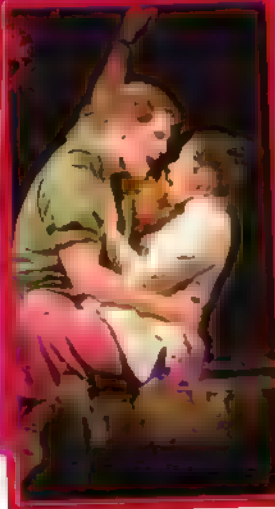
Thurs 27 July & Thurs 3 August
Barclaycard Arena, Birmingham

About A Goth

Birmingham-based Gritty Theatre are the company behind this lively show. A 'rude and raucous' comedy, it follows the trials and tribulations of a gay Goth teenager struggling to meet the challenges of living in the 21st century. The show has an anticipated but subject-to-change running time of 45 minutes and includes partial nudity (ooh err missus!).

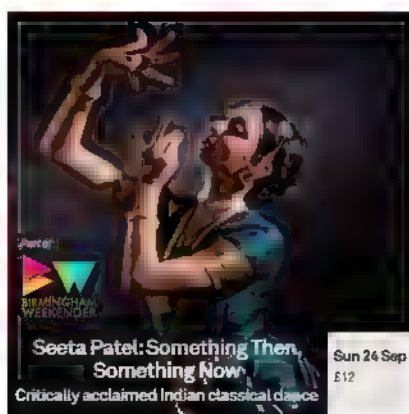
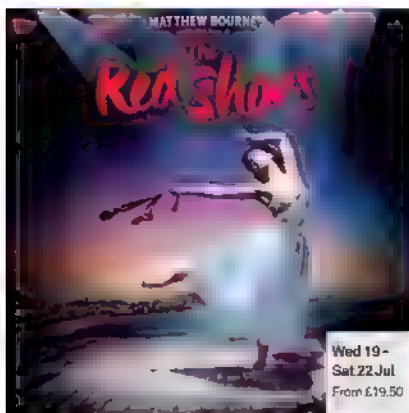
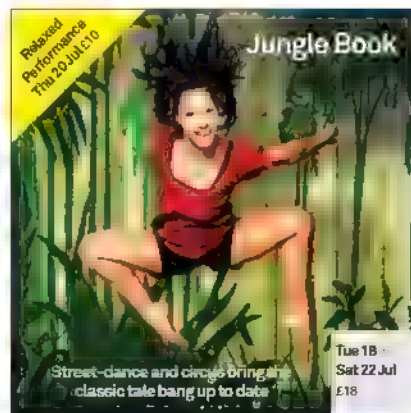
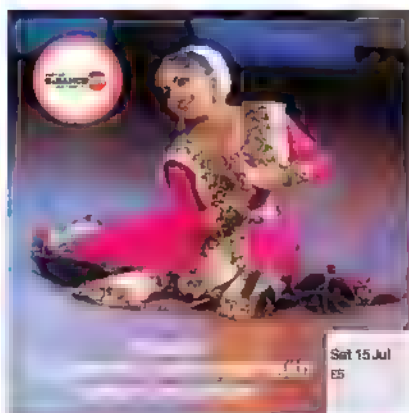
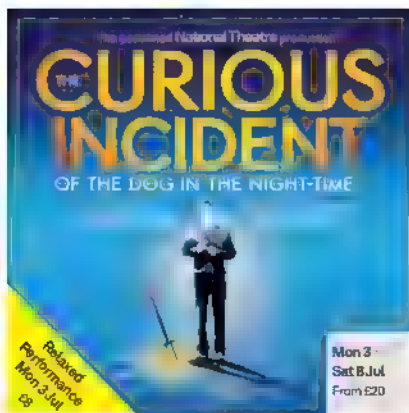
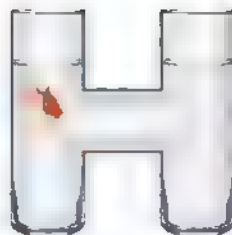
Thurs 27 July - The Crescent Theatre, Birmingham

Miss Saigon



Miss Saigon is a musical with a story of love and war. It's a story of a young woman who is sold into prostitution to save her family from the ravages of the Vietnam War. She falls in love with an American pilot who is shot down and presumed dead. She gives birth to a child, but the child is abandoned and grows up in a different world. The musical is a powerful story of love, loss, and redemption.

Wed 26 July Sat 23 September
Birmingham Hippodrome



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Godiva Festival

Lady Godiva would look great galloping through the gay village at Pride - well, her horse would be doing the galloping, of course, she'd just be waving in all her naked glory at the gaggle of salivating lesbians yearning for a touch of her alabaster-white skin.

Sadly, she only tends to turn out for Coventry's annual Godiva Parade - what with it being named after her, she probably feels an obligation.

Contributors to this year's festival include The Stranglers, Cast, Example & Del Wire, Carl Barat & The Jackals, The Darkness, Kate Nash and The Amazons.

Fri 7 - Sun 9 July War Memorial Park, Coventry

British Grand Prix

The main event needs no introduction. Lewis Hamilton, a man who once said he'd be willing to 'cut his own nuts off' to meet the required weight limit for drivers, will be getting all hot and sweaty trying to win his fifth British Grand Prix. Away from the fast lane and Lewis's clammy testicles, this three-day Silverstone spectacular offers plenty of other attractions (though perhaps none as appealing as Hamilton's nuts).



Sara Cox headlines the Friday night entertainment, presenting a DJ set called Just Can't Get Enough '80s, while Reef & The Hoosiers are the top attraction at the Saturday night concert. The RPJ Band play the Grand Prix after-party on the Sunday.

Fri 14 - Sun 16 July
Silverstone Circuit, Northamptonshire

Angels In America Part Two: Perestroika

Sometimes from the Lyric Theatre, London, this production has been touring the UK since 1990.

It's a great show, as you're for a while, really. It's a great show, as you're for a while, really. It's a great show, as you're for a while, really.

Showing Thurs 30 July visit nationaltheatre.org.uk/venues for your local venue



The Curious Incident Of The Dog In The Night-Time

Fifteen-year-old Christopher describes himself as "a mathematician with some behavioural difficulties".

Initially coming under suspicion after discovering the lifeless body of his neighbour's dog, he decides to investigate the crime - and in so doing embarks on a journey that will change his world forever. This National Theatre stage adaptation of the award winning novel bagged an impressive seven Olivier Awards in 2013 and has met with almost universal acclaim. Or, to put it another way, stop whatever you're doing (reading this is our guess) and buy your ticket NOW!

Tues 4 - Sat 8 July
Birmingham Hippodrome



Gay comedian Zoe Lyons creates funny routines based on astute observation of life's absurdities. Her latest show, Little Miami, looks back on her experiences as the awkward gay kid at school. A severe bout of alopecia didn't help her situation any, particularly when she then adopted a less-than-attractive comb-over to conceal her hair loss. She also harboured secret desires for Quiche's Angels. The blonde one, mostly, she admits. But with a comb-over, who can afford to be messy?

Mon 31 July Lichfield Garrick



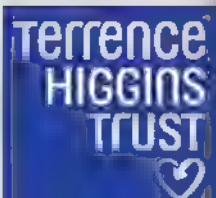
Zoe Lyons

IT STARTS WITH ME. I PROTECT MYSELF FROM HIV.

I use condoms so I can
get on with my life
without worrying.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John", is written on the right side of the green sign.

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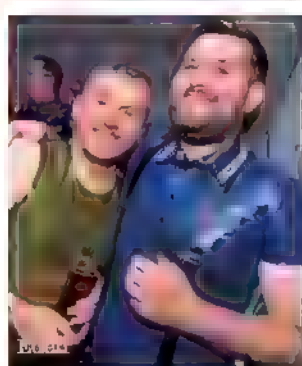
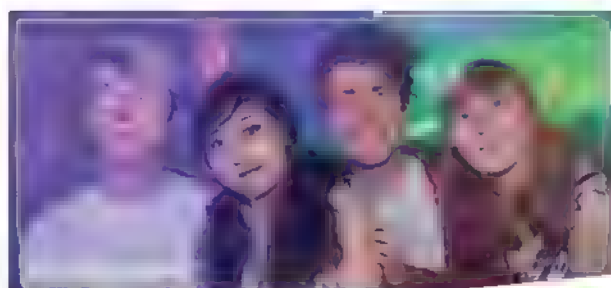
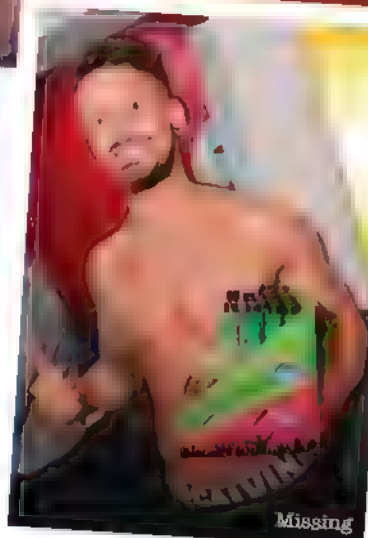


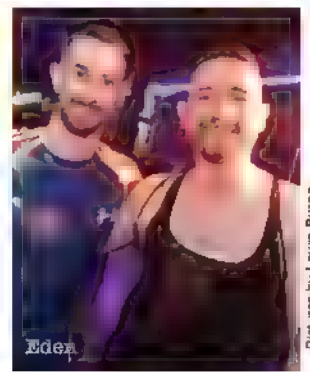
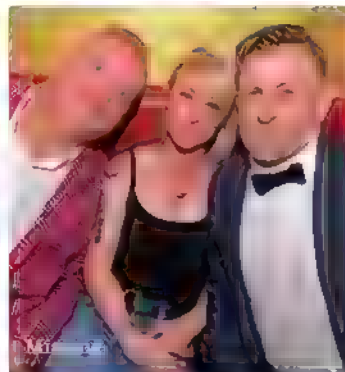
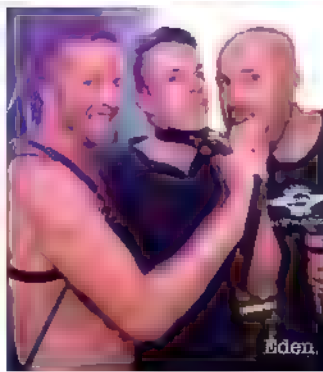
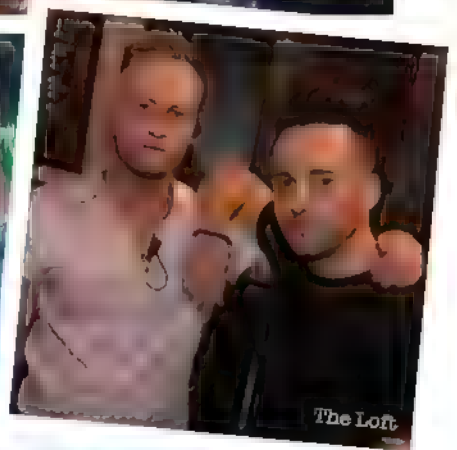
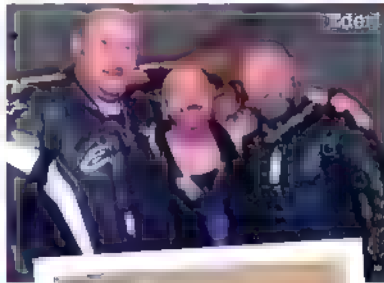
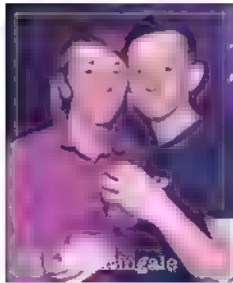
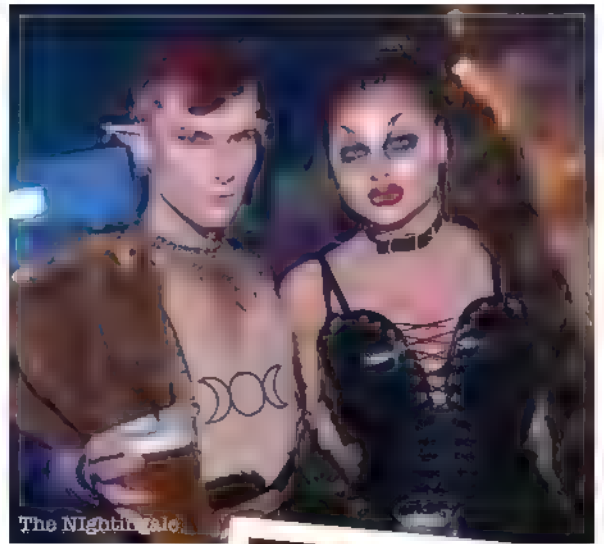
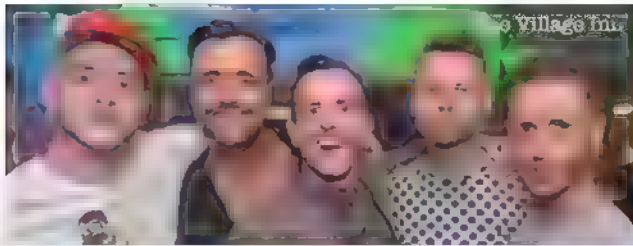


Party all night in vibrant Birmingham

If you're out for the night in Birmingham, then the city's gay scene is a great place to head for!

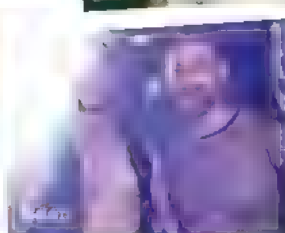
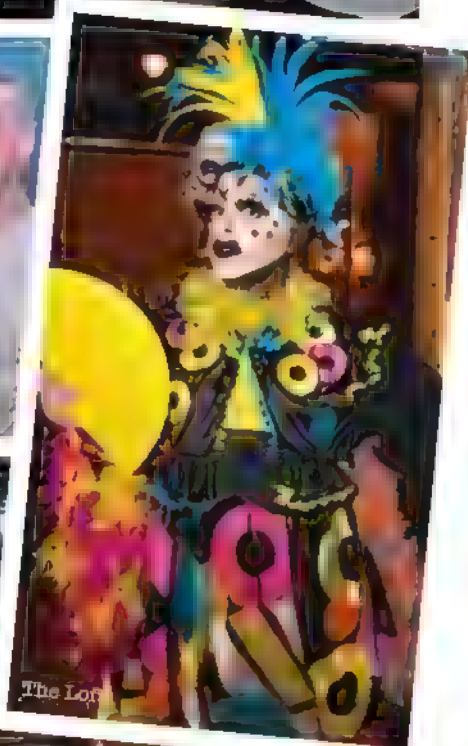
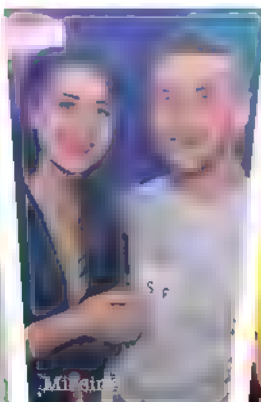
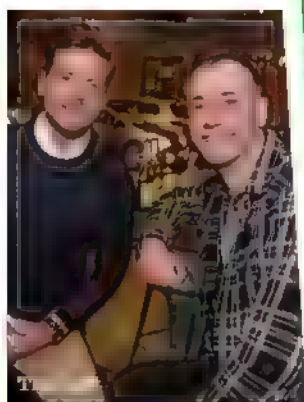
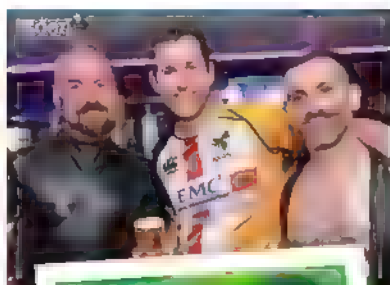
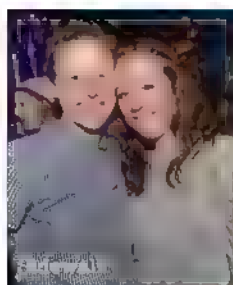
With over 15 bars and clubs to choose from, there really is something for every one. It's a truly fantastic night out!

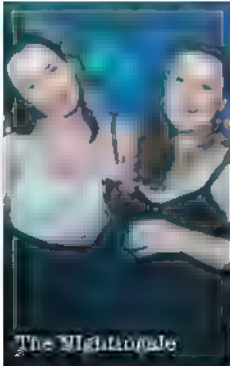




Pictures by Laura Byrne

Party all night in vibrant Birmingham

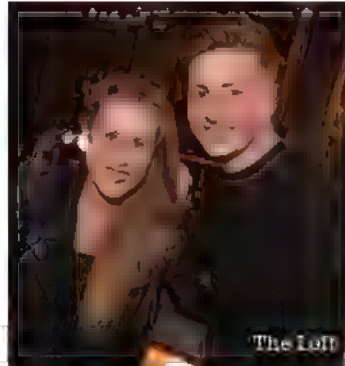




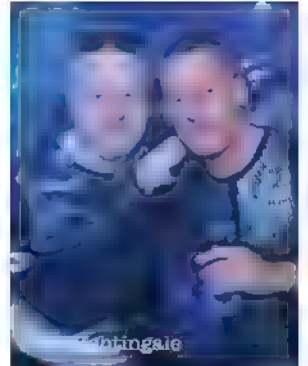
The Nightingale



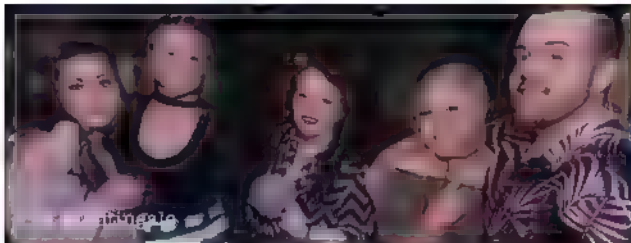
Sidewalk



The Loft



The Nightingale



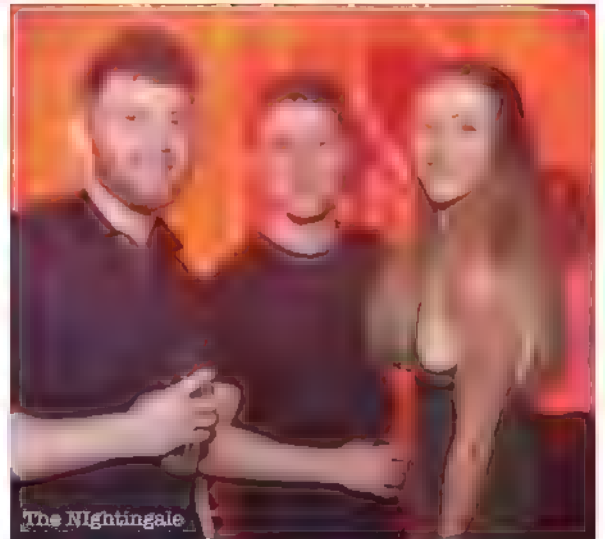
The Nightingale



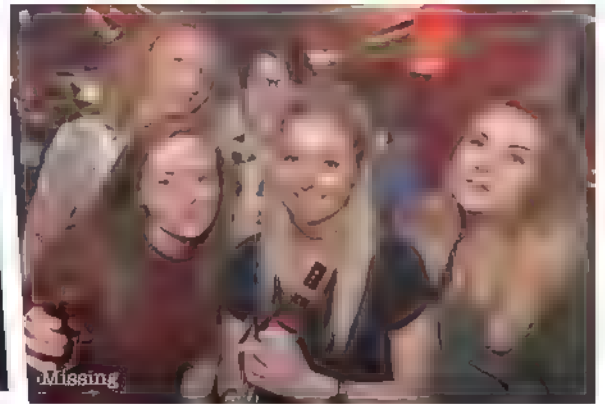
The Loft



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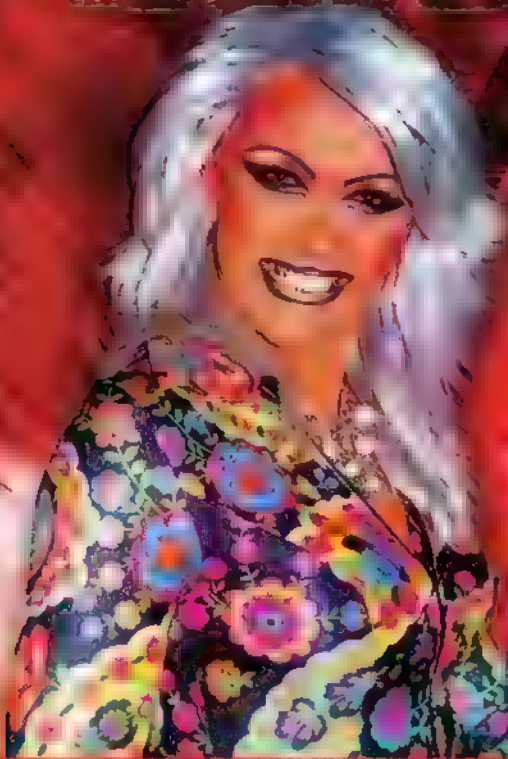
The Nightingale



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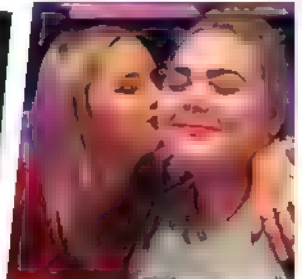
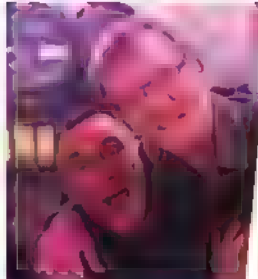
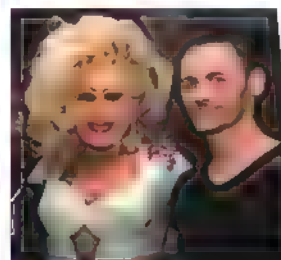
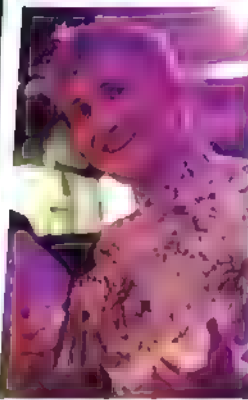
C:21

18-21 ABBEY FOREGATE, SHREWSBURY, SHROPSHIRE SY2 6AE. TEL: 01743 271821 WWW.C21SHREWSBURY.CO.UK

Monday night cabaret at C:21

We popped into Shrewsbury's C:21 bar and nightclub early last month - and boy, what a fun crowd they have!

The venue hosts cabaret on the first Monday of the month, with July seeing Birmingham's very own award winning Queen of Drag, Marty Smith, taking to the stage on Monday the 3rd!



Pictures by Craig Bellis

GORGEOUS

THURSDAY 1-6AM | FRIDAY & SATURDAY 11PM-6AM

2 BARS | VIP BOOTHS | VIP LOUNGE

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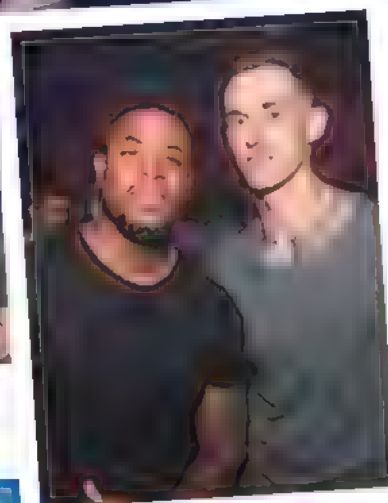
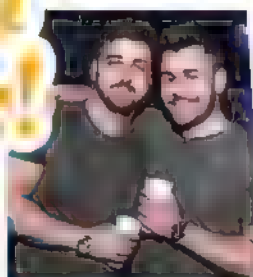
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FACEBOOK /GORGEOUSNIGHTCLUB TWITTER: @GORGEOUSWTON

GORGEOUS, SCHOOL STREET, WOLVERHAMPTON, WV1 4LF. 01902 771122

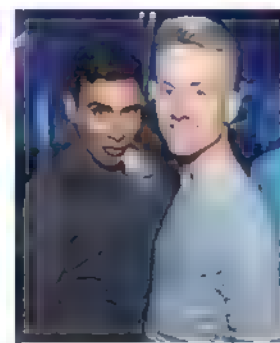
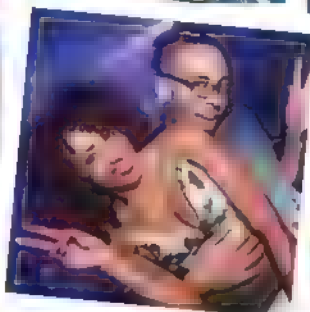
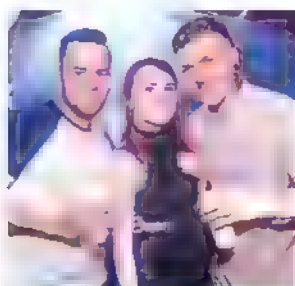


Gorgeous is Wolves' best place to party!



Another month and another great time to be had at Gorgeous! The venue is one of the most popular in the city, with great sound, lighting and atmosphere.

If you've not been along yet, be sure to pop in to see Shaun, Ricki and the rest of the team for a great night out!



Pictures by First Reunion Media

SOMETIMES THE ONLY STRAIGHT THING

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Further information available
www.leicestersexualhealth.nhs.uk



You can also check out Trade
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www.tradesexualhealth.com



Apple HomePod ▲

Last month Apple announced a new product – the HomePod. It's billed as a powerful speaker that seamlessly adapts to the room it's in, meaning you'll get the best sounding music wherever in the house it may be. Not only does it make a great speaker, HomePod also features Siri, Apple's popular voice assistant, and will allow you to access information about the latest sports scores, set alarms, timers and reminders and even turn off lights connected to your HomeKit network.

ETBC - Available in December
apple.com/uk



Apple iMac Pro ▲

Apple's iMac is certainly one of the best-looking computers we've ever seen – and with the announcement of the all-new iMac Pro, we're now even more head-over-heels in love! The iMac Pro is one impressive machine, and with its powerful collection of workstation-class graphics, processors, storage and memory, it's the perfect choice for musicians or creatives who work in graphics and video.

ETBC - Available in December
apple.com/uk



Xbox One X ▲

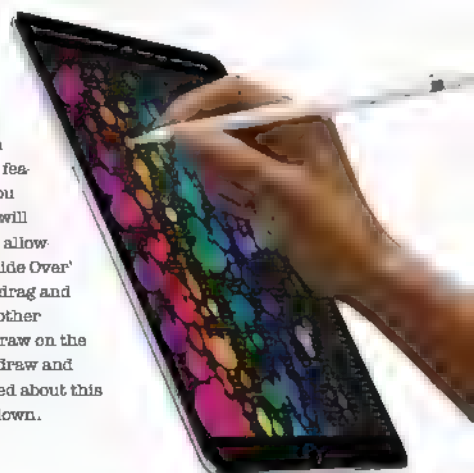
If you're an avid gamer, you'll probably be in one of two camps – the Xbox or the PlayStation. Well, Microsoft last month announced 'the most powerful console ever', featuring 6 Teraflops of graphical processing power (Yeah, we don't know what that means either), delivering true 4K gaming.

ETBC - Available in November
xbox.com

Apple iPad Pro 10.5-inch ►

Another new product that's come out of Apple's headquarters in California is the all-new iPad Pro. Featuring a 10.5 inch screen, Apple is billing it as 'the world's most advanced display' and claim that it's 'more powerful' than most PC laptops. Couple it with some killer new features in iOS 11 and the new iPad Pro may see you move away from your laptop altogether. iOS 11 will bring powerful multi-tasking to your fingertips, allowing you to run two apps at once with either a 'Slide Over' or 'Split View' system. And yes, you can finally drag and drop text, pictures and files from one app to another. And for all you creatives out there who like to draw on the go, the Apple Pencil is the perfect tool to write, draw and mark up work with great precision. We're excited about this new toy and imagine we won't be able to put it down.

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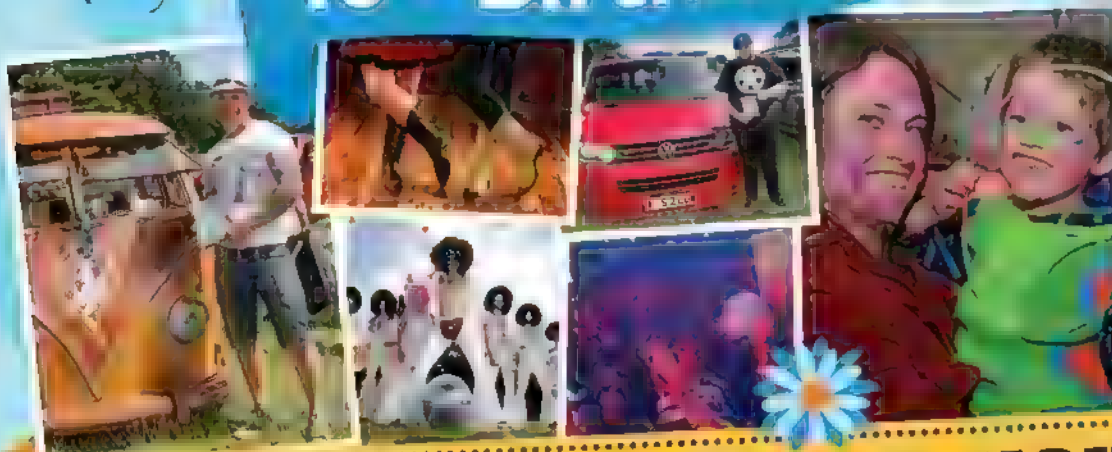
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Food and drink news from across the Midlands...

Three times Michelin-starred celebrity chef Marco Pierre White has opened a new Steakhouse Bar & Grill restaurant in four-star hotel The Best Western Plus Manor, located in Meriden, near Solihull.

A must-visit venue for local food lovers and hotel guests, the restaurant's menu features signature MPW steaks, timeless English and French classics and a comprehensive selection of premium cocktails, all delivered with Marco's unique flair.

The Meriden restaurant is the 24th Steakhouse Bar & Grill to open in the UK.



American-influenced diner and speakeasy style bar Buffalo & Rye has launched a new menu.

The Birmingham venue's latest offering includes pulled pork bon bons, buffalo prawn lollipops and buffalo reuben hash. Smoke house favourites such as St Louis ribs, olive & herb pulled lamb and butter milk chicken burgers also feature on the extensive menu.

New vegetarian options at popular Birmingham restaurant

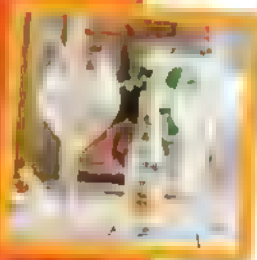
Tom's Kitchen at Birmingham's Mailbox has launched a brand new summer menu featuring a host of seasonal dishes. A key element of the menu - which has been created by Michelin-starred Tom Aikens, the restaurant's owner and head chef - is the introduction of a number of vegetarian dishes. These include Norfolk asparagus with landcress salad, summer truffles, a cacklebean egg yolk finished with spelt granola and a courgette dukkah and raw fennel salad served with turmeric and saffron dressing.

For meat eaters, roast breast of duck and grilled baby spatchcock chicken are among the new additions.

A full gluten-free menu is available on request.



That restaurant Gigging Squid serves up amazing summer drinks



A 100% vegan, plant based fast-casual food concept is coming to Birmingham city centre.

Expected to open in August, Freshh will serve speciality granary blend coffee, a variety of breakfast options and a range of salads, burgers and baked fries, including the 'What the Guac' burger, comprising guacamole, tortilla strips and 'a secret sauce'.

Other hot dishes include the Mac N' Cheese with a creamy sauce, and a Meatball Sub in marinara sauce topped with vegan mozzarella.

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THE LIFE OF A THIRTYSOMETHING GAY

“Orlando: One Year On”

The 12 of June marked the one-year anniversary of 29-year-old Omar Mateen walking into Pulse nightclub in Florida and firing his militarised semi-automatic rifle, killing 49 people and injuring 58.

If such an event in itself was not horrific enough, the incident lasted over three hours, as Mateen held hostage many of the 320 people inside the club, all of whom were there that night celebrating a Latino event.

The local authorities were quick to act, but by the time the siege was brought to an end and Mateen shot dead, many unsuspecting clubbers were traumatised, wounded or dead. America's gun law, enshrined in the right to bear arms in the country's Constitution, has proven controversial for many a decade. Incidents of gun crime are high in the States, particularly in the south. Yet despite the frequency, the Pulse nightclub massacre remains the deadliest mass shooting by a single gunman and the deadliest act of violence against LGBT people in the history of America. It shocked the world, and not just LGBT communities, as unbridled hatred was once again wrapped up in acts of terror in which the innocent were targeted.

Opinion remains divided as to whether Mateen himself was gay. He's known to have frequented Pulse on numerous occasions. He was socially awkward. Sometimes he would drink alone in a corner of the club, speaking to no one; on other occasions he would drink too much and become vocal, aggressive and homophobic. He was seen on Grindr and other such apps, only for his profile to disappear. He was a security guard. An ex police academy associate who'd known Mateen as far back as 2006 reported that they would both frequent gay bars when in police training together. Yet after the FBI carried out a detailed investigation, they found no gay dating apps on his phone. When his home was raided and his computer seized, there were no files, pornography or emails to indicate in any way that he identified as LGBT. If he was in the closet and wrestling with his sexuality, there was no outward trace of it.

Some believe Mateen often visited the nightclub because he wanted to plan out how to conduct his campaign of terror, having become radicalised by an extreme Islamic ideology. Others that he was a reclusive figure and simply wanted company but was rejected by those around him. We will probably never know for sure, but what remains certain is that his campaign was brutal, premeditated and driven by a desire for martyrdom.

Over a year on, what has changed, if anything? Well, for starters, nations across the globe came together in solidarity as a mark of respect for those caught up in the tragedy. Vigils were held, candles lit and people fell silent to honour the dead and wounded. Politicians and world leaders sent their condolences, and Hillary Clinton, then campaigning for the US presidency, took to the stage calling for increased anti terror moves, more gun control and solidarity with LGBT Americans.

Multi faith representatives, themselves ideologically opposed, in the main, to homosexuality, put aside their strict interpretation of their religious texts and preached for peace. The world stood up and sympathised, and many more showed great acts of kindness. Money poured in to help the victims and their families. A foundation was created by Barbara Poma, the owner of Pulse, having turned down an offer from city authorities to purchase the club off her for \$2.25million. The Pulse Foundation has, for the last year, been running a series of events to raise an official memorial and museum, as well as providing for the families. It's inspirational stuff.

But in the same year, the world has also gone a little crazy. Donald Trump sits in the White House, his record on LGBT rights something that our cousins across the big pond are rightly concerned by. In Russia, Vladimir Putin declared recently that he would never shower with a gay man, and happily promotes anti-LGBT policies which see people beaten in the streets on account of their sexuality. Here in the UK, things suddenly look less than rosy too. Teresa



May's shady deals with the DUP to shore up her leadership sent out shockwaves. The DUP, who rigidly promote traditional family values and are openly opposed to LGBT rights, now have a more influential voice in our democratic system of government. Democracy can be a bitch sometimes, but thank god for the likes of the leader of the Scottish Conservatives, Ruth Davidson. Herself an out-and-proud lesbian, she demanded and promptly received assurances from the prime minister before the deal with the DUP was done, protecting our hard-won rights and our community's ongoing voice in parliament.

So a year on from Pulse, what have we really learned? We've learned more than ever to stick together and not be beaten by the bullies. To stand our ground during adversity and to come together in solidarity. We have again taken to the political stage when our rights are threatened. We also continue to open our arms and show the world how rich and diverse our community is. Marching in the Pride parade this year, I was amazed by how the city came together to celebrate our culture, to show love and support and to cheer us all on. If we all strive for inclusion, which is what many of the victims of the shooting at Pulse nightclub have done, then no matter what is thrown our way, we will continue to be strong and defiant.

As I write, we are still very much up to our vulnerables in political mayhem. I have some certainty that this chaos is sufficiently strong and stable to muddy the waters for some time to come following this most pointless and ridiculous of general elections.

Despite paying them an eye-watering amount of money (roughly £150million on salaries alone), propping them in the most stunning of our old London buildings, and providing them with a number of well stocked at-work bars, it's of no real surprise that our politicians are not really up to much, and that our electoral system is not sufficiently robust to represent our needs, wishes and expectations in an effective fashion. We have long suspected this to be the case.

What is, however, perhaps unpredicted, is the extent to which gay issues have taken centre stage. And at a time when there were so many press-

ing issues to concern the populace - the small matter of Brexit, for example.

The beleaguered Theresa May government decided that the best way to end the chaos was to hold hands with the DUP. An interesting decision given the extreme unpopularity of some of that party's very public views - particularly around abortion and gay rights. But then again, the DUP have been around a long time.

What was interesting was the speed with which Ruth Davidson, the leader of the Scottish Conservatives, stepped up to speak out about the concerns that so many of us had. She spoke to Theresa May immediately and received important reassurances. Ruth made it very clear that there are some issues which surpass party politics - and gay rights is one of those. A refreshingly forthright, common sense approach.

Talking of refreshingly forthright com-

mon sense approaches, that's not what we got from Tim Farron, who, when leader of the Liberal Democrats, demonstrated that he was not as liberal as it said on the tin - or should that be 'on the Tim'?

During the general election campaign, he refused to say that being gay was not a sin, and he then resigned as leader, saying that he didn't want to be asked any more tricky questions about gay people, as his religious views didn't allow him to give very popular answers (or words to that effect).

So, there we were on main stage in the most contentious and important (in EU terms) general election many of us will ever see. We're still taking some flack, but we have very public support.

Like a phoenix rising from the ashes of charred voting papers, all politic eyes are on us

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ON THE BALL

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Steve Ball

Hung, Drawn & Quartered

Two days before the general election, I chaired a Queer Question Time event in Birmingham. Panellists from all the political parties debated a range of issues with Peter Tatchell and a sizable audience.

Not surprisingly there was heated debate, especially on Brexit and sex education in schools, but there was also consensus about the need to continue to promote tolerance and preserve hard-fought LGBT rights.

When asked by an audience member why we still need a Queer Question Time in 2017, the straight UKIP panelist spoke about the value of these events in terms of informing the candidates about the needs of the LGBT

community.

Sadly this cross-party consensus wasn't to last long - fast forward 60 hours to the shock result of a hung parliament, with the Conservatives winning most seats but falling short of an overall majority. The 'Coalition of Chaos' Theresa May had warned us about if Labour, the SNP and the Lib Dems were to get it together was realised in the form of a pact between the Tories and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP).

For those who don't know much about the DUP, they aren't exactly gay-friendly. Back in the 1970s, their Save Ulster From Sodomy campaign was designed to prevent the decriminalisa-

tion of homosexuality in Northern Ireland. They still want to make it legal to discriminate against anyone from the LGBT community, while DUP member Iris Robinson claims that "gays are more vile than child abusers".

Worryingly the DUP seem to have been presented with an ally in the form of the new Justice Secretary, David Livingston. A quick glance at Mr Livingston's voting history in Parliament indicates that he may not have the interests of our community at heart. In 1998 he voted against reducing the age of consent for gay people from 18 to 16. Four years later he voted against an amendment to the Adoption and Children Bill, which sought to allow same-sex couples to adopt children. In 2003 he opted to maintain a ban in schools on the 'promotion' of homosexuality, and in May 2013, he voted against allowing same-sex couples to marry.

Well done, Scottish Tory leader Ruth Davidson, for telling the PM that there must be no watering down of equalities laws. But at a time when the balance of political power is held by a party with bigoted views, it's never been more important for all of us in the LGBT community to stand up for equality.

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THE VIRAL ROUND-UP

Here's what we've been looking at online...

We all do it - spend hours on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. Often we're distracted from what we should be doing by cat videos and funny pranks - or by something feelgood that's been shared so much on the net it's officially classed as 'viral'. Well, here are some of Midlands Zone's favourites from the past month!



Tyler Oakley **VISITS PULSE ORLANDO** one year on from the deadly attack...

Visiting Orlando's Pulse nightclub one year after the horrific shooting in which 49 people were killed and many more injured, gay YouTuber Tyler Oakley shines a light on how the local LGBT community has coped in the aftermath of the tragedy.

Oakley visits the venue, speaks to people

from Orlando's gay community and meets with the director of the Central Florida LGBT Centre, in an emotional video about the city's queer resilience.

If you haven't seen it yet, check it out on YouTube at youtu.be/kIHQLutatCI

CELEB SNAPS!

Our fave celeb Instagram snaps...



CHEEKY! It's just Austin Armacost working out with no pants on!

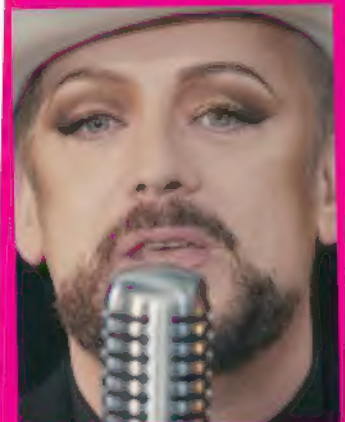


Scissor Sisters' Jake Shears rocking a playsuit for New Orleans Pride!



The Warwick Rowers take advantage of the hot summer weather!

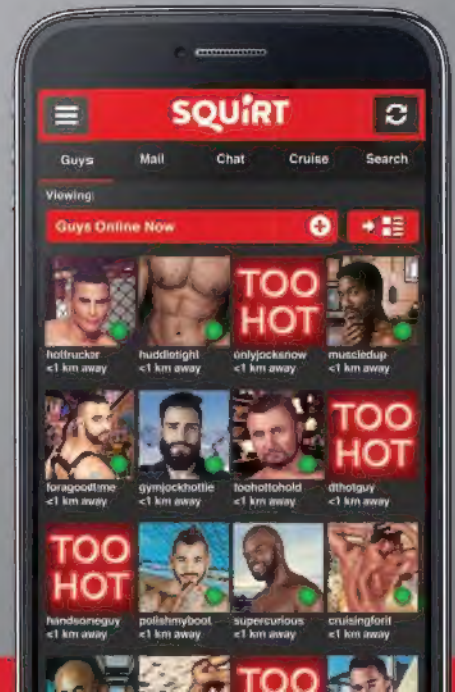
BOY GEORGE covers gay anthem YMCA



It's one of the campiest, most iconic anthems in gay history. Yes, we're talking about The Village People's YMCA. Well, surprisingly, gay legend Boy George has covered the hit in a bid to raise money for YMCA Australia's Why Not? campaign. Should this classic have been messed with? Let us know what you think after checking it out here: youtu.be/mi2hEyzqfos

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